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THE HISTORY OF IRELAND

FROM THE

REFORMATION TO THE UNION.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

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AND SPECIALLY ANNOTATED BY THE AUTHOR.



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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE GERMAN EDITION.

THE following work originated in a treatise of mine on "Ireland from 1660 to 1760," which appeared about Easter of the year 1883, in connection with the curriculum of the Royal Gymnasium at Ostrowo. This dissertation received favourable notice in several newspapers and periodicals, and numerous requests were made to me, both personally and by letter, urging me to amplify and extend the work, and, in its enlarged form, to give it to the public.

In acceding to the request, I have been mainly influenced by the fact that there exists no recent history of Ireland in the German language; and that in view of the peculiar rôle which this island has for many years played in the history of the British empire, not only professional students of history, but also many educated people feel the necessity of more accurate information respecting the past of that country.

It is obvious that a history of Ireland can only possess any great interest for us Germans, in so far as it stands related to the events which have transpired in the powerful neighbouring kingdom. For this reason the Reformation appears to present the most natural starting-point for our historical research, inasmuch as before this period the dominion of England over the western isle existed more in name than in reality. As regards the *terminus ad quem*, I was strongly disposed to continue the historical narrative to the present time, or, at least, to the date of Catholic emancipation; nevertheless, I have felt bound to resist this temptation, because, to me, it seems scarcely possible yet to arrive at a definite and conclusive judgment on the history of the present century. I have accordingly preferred to break off with the accomplishment of the Union; for this event, which annihilated the independent Irish Parliament, and put an end to the separate political

existence of Ireland, is surely an epoch of eminent importance, and one, therefore, with which it does not appear inappropriate to close our narrative.

The period which was treated in the dissertation above referred to thus occupies but a small section of the present work (chaps. v.-viii.); and it is possible that I may be charged with having handled the earlier period too summarily, while devoting too great a space to the representation of the last twenty years. In my judgment, however, the time from 1780 to 1800—that is, the era which embraces the struggle for independence, and the succeeding years of legislative freedom; which witnessed the effects upon Ireland of the French Revolution, the formidable rebellion of 1798, and the proceedings in connection with the Union—belongs to the most eventful portion of Irish history. Moreover, as “Grattan’s Parliament,” and “legislative independence,” are the watchwords adopted by Parnell and the party of Home Rule, this period possesses for us a certain present interest. On this account there may be many persons desirous of obtaining some more definite information respecting the years in which legislative independence actually existed in Ireland.

AUTHOR’S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

FOR my German readers I considered that a detailed system of notes might properly be dispensed with, and, therefore, in the original edition of this work, I merely appended a short bibliographical index, for the guidance of those who might wish to acquaint themselves more fully with any particular period of the history. But to the English public, to whom these authorities are, in general, easier of access, I judged that continuous notes might possibly be more acceptable, and I accordingly decided to annotate the English edition. It has been necessary, however, that the notes should be prepared somewhat hurriedly, and for this reason I would ask the indulgence of the reader, if, perchance, among the references an occasional small error may have crept in.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.—IRELAND BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

WHEN a nation just emerging from barbarism is subjugated by one possessing a higher degree of civilization, it is usually compensated for the loss of its independence by being made the recipient of all those blessings and benefits which are associated with a more advanced culture. But a very different state of things is revealed to us in the case of the occupation of Ireland by the English. Instead of endearing British civilization to the hearts of the Irish by a policy of moderation and conciliation, thus paving the way to a gradual union of the conquered with the conquering race, the dominant English nation has, by a course of intentional oppression, and by a series of mistakes naturally unintentional, attained this result: that not only has the Celtic race suffered a constant deterioration in its social condition, but, on the other hand, it has also become spiritually degenerate, because, from the lack of proper stimulus, the scanty germs of native culture which already existed were arrested in their development, and consequently perished. And yet, that under a politically rational treatment the Irish would not have opposed either amalgamation or the introduction of British civilization, is plainly evident from the very slight resistance they offered at the time of their primary subjection.

Let us inquire how the conquest of the island was really effected. Curiously enough, we find that the first impulse to the English acquisition of Ireland was given by the Court of Rome. In the year 1154, Pope Adrian IV., an Englishman by birth, issued a bull ceding Hibernia and all the adjacent islands to Henry II., in consideration of the payment to the papal see of an annual tax of one penny on

every inhabited building ; but it was not until fourteen years later, when MacDermot,¹ Prince of Leinster, having been driven from Ireland by King Roderic O'Connor and the chieftain of Meath, fled to Henry II. and offered to do homage, that a fitting opportunity was presented for the king to turn this grant to his own advantage. At Henry's command several Anglo-Norman barons went over to Ireland, where, notwithstanding the small number of their followers, they achieved such brilliant successes that Henry's jealousy was aroused, and he recalled them ; and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the most illustrious of his vassals, Richard Earl of Pembroke, commonly known as Strongbow, prevailed upon him to countermand the order. The king, however, not satisfied that his barons should reap all the military glory, towards the close of the year 1171 undertook a personal expedition to Ireland. The opposition with which he met was inconsiderable. King Roderic O'Connor was speedily reduced to submission, and the princes of Cork, Limerick, and Ossory did homage, and received their lands as fiefs of the English Crown. The city of Dublin and the surrounding districts Henry appropriated to himself, while the eastern portion of the country he conferred upon the barons in fee, the most richly endowed of these being Earl Strongbow, who received the greater part of Leinster, and who, having married the daughter of MacDermot, had claims upon the succession on the death of his father-in-law.²

Thus, within a period of about three years, the whole of Ireland had submitted to the English. Several causes com-

¹ The bull is given in the "Expugnatio Hiberniæ" of Giraldus Cambrensis, lib. ii. cap. vi., which is to be found in Camden's "Anglica, Hibernica, Normannica" (Frankfort, 1602), p. 787 ; extracted herefrom by Rymer in "Feedera," i. p. 19 ; Mansi, xxi. p. 788 ; by MacGeoghan, in his "Histoire de l'Irlande ancienne et moderne" (Par. 1758), vol. i. p. 460. Compare also Taffé in his "Regesta Pontificum Romanorum" (1851), vol. i. p. 665. Recently, the genuineness of this bull has been impugned (*e.g.* by Knöpfler in the new edition of Hefele's "Concilien geschichte," bd. v. p. 682 ; also by Gasquet in the *Dublin Review*, 1883, vol. x. p. 83), but in my judgment without sufficient grounds.

² The most important authority with regard to the occupation of Ireland is Giraldus Cambrensis, in his "Expugnatio Hiberniæ," lib. i. ii. (Camden, *loc. cit.*, 755-813).

bined, it is true, to accelerate the occupation, the principal of which were: a want of united action, owing to the country being split up into many small principalities, which necessarily rendered any energetic opposition difficult; the earlier Danish invasions, which had weakened the country and lessened its powers of resistance; and lastly, and chiefly, the winning over to the king's side of the entire ecclesiastical body, which was effected by the Synod of Cashel, held in 1172, under the presidency of Bishop Christian of Lismore, at which the royal chaplain, Nicholas, was present, and which for the first time allotted tithes to the clergy.¹ The support of this body was of the greatest importance to the king, and facilitated in a high degree the subjugation of the country. But little as we would undervalue these circumstances, it must be admitted that a national antipathy could scarcely have existed among the Celtic inhabitants, otherwise their subjection could not have been accomplished at the cost of so little trouble.

Easy, however, as had been the conquest of the country, it was equally difficult to retain it.² The primary reason of this was that the Irish could not be brought to comprehend the feudal system, which, according to the pattern of the middle ages, the conquerors had established in the land. The consequence was, that although the princes of the north and west all readily submitted to Henry II., and although, to use an expression employed by Matthew of Paris, "twenty terrified kinglets" subsequently renewed their oath of allegiance in the reign of his son John, within a short period they had lost all sense of subordination, and ultimately regarded themselves as independent rulers of their territory.

The English dominion was thus substantially limited to the eastern provinces, which were in possession of the Anglo-Norman barons, and in which numerous English colonists had already settled. But even in these districts, in the "Pale" as they were designated, the English Government showed

¹ Compare Giraldus Cambrensis, *loc. cit.*, lib. i. c. 34 (Camden, *loc. cit.*, p. 777).

² Compare Beaumont's "L'Irlande sociale, politique, et religieuse," (Par., 2 ed., 1831) vol. i. pp. 26 *et seq.*

itself unequal to the task of colonisation. The authorities in England were above all things concerned that the governor, or lord-lieutenant (the king's representative in the Pale) should not become too powerful ; accordingly, after a short term of office he was invariably recalled, and the fact that in the thirteenth century Ireland had forty-six, in the fourteenth century ninety-five, and in the fifteenth century eighty-five lord-lieutenants,¹ must have been one eminently unfavourable to good government. They came to the country they were expected to rule unacquainted with its circumstances ; and not having the opportunity, during their short official career, of gaining that knowledge of affairs indispensable for wise administration, they committed one blunder after another, and instead of striving to win the attachment of the Irish population by mild and humane treatment, they regarded them as creatures of an inferior mould, who might be enslaved or oppressed at pleasure. Thus, in the thirteenth century the native Irish were prohibited from attaining any of the dignities of the Church ;² their evidence was inadmissible in a court of law ;³ and in the fourteenth century this system of persecution had acquired such dimensions that Pope John XXII. took occasion to complain to King Edward II. of the oppressions to which the Irish were subjected.⁴

But while, on the one hand, the native population was treated with harshness and severity, on the other hand, no provision was being made for strengthening and establishing the Anglo-Saxon colony. True, there were Englishmen in abundance to whom Irish lands had been granted, but no effort was made to retain the landlords on their estates ; and considering the proximity of England, and its more advanced culture, it is not difficult to understand that many Irish landlords, who were of English extraction, preferred merely to

¹ See Lappenburg, in Ersch and Grüber's "Realencyclopaedie," *vide* "Ireland," p. 67.

² Compare the papal brief of Pope Honorius III. to his legate, Jacobus, bearing date the 13th August, 1220, to be found in Theiner's "Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum historiam illustrantia" (Rom. 1864), p. 16, No. 36.

³ See Theiner, *loc. cit.*, p. 16, No. 38.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 201, No. 422.

draw the rents from their Irish estates, and to take up their permanent residence in England. The result was that considerable sums of money were withdrawn from the country ; while, in consequence of the absenteeism of the landlords, the cultivation of the soil was neglected and the civilization of the native population retarded.

Instead of the Celts being transformed into Englishmen, the resident English landlords, on the contrary, and more especially those living in the interior of the land, became by degrees increasingly Celtic. As it was mostly the educated and wealthy proprietors who were absentees, those English landlords who remained in Ireland gradually attached themselves to the primitive inhabitants of the country, grew less civilized, adopted Celtic manners and customs, and became ‘*Hibernis hiberniores*.’

In order to prevent this growing Celticism of the English colonists, the Government adopted a course as ill-calculated as possible to attain the desired end. They had, indeed, early recognised the fact that the evil condition of the country was really owing to the prevailing absenteeism of the landlords, and had already, in the reign of Richard II., imposed a tax on absentees.¹ But the only means which appeared to the bulk of the ruling English class likely to put a stop to the ever-increasing Celticism of the land, was a factitious separation of the colonists from the Irish. This was the object of the refusal to grant community of laws.² English statutes were only valid in the Pale, and there only for the resident English. The benefit of English laws was denied to the Irish, although they specially requested that it might be

¹ Comp. Gordon’s “History of Ireland” (1806), i. p. 200 ; also Beaumont, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 31.

² The refusal to allow the Irish to live under English law is referred to by Davies as constituting a wall of separation between the native race and the English settlers, in his work, “A Discoverie of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued nor brought under obedience of the Crowne of England until the beginning of his Majesty’s happie Reigne” (1612), p. 73. Thus, at a trial for murder, in 1311, it was pleaded as an extenuating circumstance that the murdered man was “*purus Hibernicus*.” Similarly, some years earlier, a man accused of rape was acquitted on the ground that his victim was an Irishwoman. See Thomas Moore’s “History of Ireland,” ii. p. 177.

extended to them. They were consequently confined to their own native “brehon law,” and this unequal administration of justice naturally formed a chief wall of partition between Irish and Anglo-Saxon. But this was not enough. In the year 1367, in the reign of Edward III., the notorious “Statute of Kilkenny”¹ was passed, which completed the separation. According to this statute, the English colonists in Ireland were forbidden, on pain of incurring the penalty of high treason, to unite themselves with the Irish either by marriage or sponsorship ; to present a Church living to an Irishman, to receive him into a monastery, or to offer the rights of hospitality in their houses to an Irish bard or minstrel. Imprisonment and confiscation of property awaited those who even took an Irish name, allowed their beards to be cut after Celtic fashion, or adopted the Irish costume. And that this statute did not exist merely in the statute book, is evidenced by the fact that in the time of Edward IV. an English baron had to lay his head upon the block for having married a wife of Irish race.²

What, it will be asked, were the results of this system of forced separation ? One was that a deadly hatred sprang up between the two races, which it was the duty of the administration to have appeased ; while another result was that the civilization of the Celts made no advance whatever. And how could it possibly have been otherwise? When the British Government refused to govern the native inhabitants of the country according to British laws, the Irish clung, as a matter of necessity, to their own barbarous brehon law, which for every crime and offence had but one pecuniary fine (Eric), and rejecting all claim to private property, recognised only one common possession in which the entire clan had a vested interest. And when, moreover, every Englishman was at liberty to oppress the Irish, and reduce them to a condition of servitude, the Irishman could not fail to regard the Saxon as his direst foe.

¹ Comp. Leland’s “History of Ireland from the Invasion of Henry II.” (1773), vol. i. p. 320 ; also Davies, *loc. cit.*, pp. 127, 128.

² See MacGeoghan, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 192.

When, therefore, in the fifteenth century, the wars of the Roses broke out in England, and, distracted by internal struggles, the authorities in the mother-country were unable to devote the requisite attention to Irish affairs, it was inevitable, in the face of these national antipathies, that the Irish should be prepared to make skilful use of the opportunity. It was not only the princes of the west, the chieftains of Connaught and Thomond, who in the reign of Richard II. had renewed their allegiance, who now contrived to throw off the yoke of British supremacy; British influence was also diminishing year by year in the eastern provinces. The districts in which the British element was but feebly represented likewise renounced their fealty, and those English colonists who had adopted Celticism, and were becoming assimilated to the surrounding barbarism, made common cause with the native inhabitants. They also withdrew from the Irish Parliament, which had been in existence since the beginning of the fourteenth century, and which in those disturbed times might have successfully raised the question of incorporation with England and the formation of a United Kingdom. This representative assembly was, consequently, composed simply of delegates from about five or six of the eastern counties and a few towns in which the English colonists had possessed more stability.

Accordingly, when Henry VII., the first monarch of the Tudor line, ascended the English throne in 1485, the English Pale was restricted to these few counties. At the time of his accession, the same party feuds which were distracting England also raged in Ireland. The illustrious family of Geraldine, or Fitzgerald, sided with the Yorkists; the Butlers, or the house of Ormond, with the Lancastrians. It was in Ireland, too, that the pretenders, Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, first made their appearance; but all the plots against the claims of the House of Tudor were happily frustrated, and by Henry's sagacious policy the Earl of Kildare, who was the chief of the Geraldines, and friendly to the Yorkists, was won over to espouse the king's side.

About the same time, under the energetic administration of

Sir Edward Poyning, a number of laws were passed which at once restricted the power of the Irish nobility and strengthened English influence in the Pale, and which, on the whole, tended to establish closer relations between England and Ireland. In the first place, the nobles were compelled to diminish the number of their retainers, a similar regulation having already been enforced in England ; while the right to declare war and carry on hostilities on their own account was made wholly dependent on royal permission. It was further ordained that all former statutes of the English Parliament which aimed at the public well-being should be extended to Ireland, and should have the same validity there as in England. Finally, in the year 1495 was passed that important law, known as Poyning's Act,¹ which decreed that no Irish Parliament should be convoked until its collective schemes had been sanctioned by the English Privy Council, and attested by the Great Seal. This law, it is true, paralysing as it did the initiative of the Irish Parliament, and making it completely dependent on England, proved, in after years, the source of endless complications between English and Irish interests ; but at that time the influence exerted by the Act was a wholesome one, inasmuch as it limited the absolute power of the lord-lieutenant, and rendered impossible any policy of the English colony which might be inimical to the mother-country.

From this time, therefore, English rule in Ireland was, at least, no longer retrogressive, and had it not been that with the accession of Henry VIII., yet another element of discord was introduced in addition to those already existing, and this a religious one, the later fortunes of the land might have assumed a happier aspect.

¹ Respecting Sir Edward Poyning's Act, consult Leland, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. pp. 107, 108 ; also Lord Mountmorres, in his "History of the Principal Transactions of the Irish Parliament," vol. i. p. 47. For information concerning the other events of the reign of Henry VII., see Bagwell's "Ireland under the Tudors" (Lond., 1885), vol. i. chap. viii.

CHAPTER II.

IRELAND UNTIL THE DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.— ATTEMPTS TO INTRODUCE THE REFORMATION.—THE NATIONAL INSURRECTIONS.

WHILE in Germany the work of the Reformation was evoked by an internal religious need, in the British isles the separation from Rome was accomplished at the beck of a violent and sensual monarch, who, by the aid of servile counsellors, himself assumed ecclesiastical supremacy, and, like an oriental despot, under menace of the most cruel penalties, utilized the power thus obtained to enslave the consciences of his subjects. But reckless as was the course pursued in England, unhesitating as was the determination to proceed, if need be, through blood and murder in the prosecution of this object, in Ireland the Reformation was far more fatal in its results, and even a statesman of Lord Clare's severely Protestant principles has not scrupled to characterise it as “the ruin and curse of Ireland.”

In 1531, when Henry VIII. allowed himself to be appointed head of the Church by the ecclesiastical convocation, and thus consummated the rupture with Rome, the lord-lieutenant of Ireland was a native nobleman, the powerful Gerald, Earl of Kildare. In consequence of various complaints having reached the king relative to his arrogant and imperious policy, Henry commanded him to appear in London to answer the charges made against him. Appointing his son Thomas deputy lord-lieutenant during his absence, the Earl of Kildare, in 1534, obeyed his sovereign's behest; but no sooner had he arrived in the English capital than he was seized and thrown into the Tower. Shortly after this, the false rumour was circulated in Ireland that he had been put to death, where-

upon his son Thomas raised the standard of revolt. In order to obtain assistance in his conflict with England, he entered into negotiation with Charles V., the more confident in securing the co-operation of this monarch because of the insult which Henry VIII. had offered to the imperial family by the divorce of his first wife, Catherine, who was an aunt of Charles. He also entered into communication with Pope Clement VII., and begged to be invested with the crown of Ireland as the gift of the papal chair, for which he not only promised to pay a yearly tribute to the Roman see, according to the terms of Pope Adrian's bull, but also to bear arms against the schismatical king of England.

In this way the Irish inaugurated the policy of seeking the interference of foreign nations in matters of dispute between themselves and England, a policy which played a part so extremely ruinous for the country, and produced in the English mind an exasperation which vented itself in hideous acts of revenge. In this case, however, the attempts made by Lord Thomas Fitzgerald were unsuccessful. The pope had not yet resigned all hope of reconciliation between England and Rome, and he, therefore, prolonged the negotiations warily and diplomatically. Charles V., on the other hand, was at that time nursing very comprehensive projects, having just planned his invasion of Tunis, and was, consequently, little disposed to allow himself to be diverted from his purposes by the proposal to enter into conflict with England. Several Irish chieftains, it is true, had taken up the cause of Lord Thomas, and in the beginning of the struggle there seemed a likelihood that fortune would favour the insurgents. Some bodies of English troops were defeated, and Archbishop Allen, of Dublin, was forced by the rebels to flee, and slain before he could effect his escape. Ultimately, however, the resources of the insurrectionists became exhausted, and his life and liberty having been assured to him by the lord-lieutenant, Lord Thomas saw himself compelled to submit. But Lord Gray, the new viceroy, did not conceive himself to be bound by the engagements of his predecessor, and, accordingly, sent him prisoner to London. Here he learnt that his father's life had not been

ended by the axe of the executioner, as report had caused him to believe, but that he had been brought to the grave by grief at the rash rebellion instigated by his son. In London, Thomas Fitzgerald paid the penalty of his revolt on the scaffold, a fate shared by five of his uncles, whom Lord Gray invited to a banquet, and then treacherously caused to be arrested and sent to England.¹

After the Government had thus, by a double act of perfidy, rid itself of the Fitzgeralds, the most distinguished family in the Pale, a short period of calm ensued in the country, of which advantage was taken to effect the severance of the connection between Rome and the Church in Ireland, and to give to the latter an independent organization. To this end a Parliament was convoked in Dublin, and as it was anticipated that the greatest amount of opposition would proceed from the country clergy or proctors, the first step taken was to deprive them of their right to vote, only permitting them to be present at the sittings and to give the assembly the benefit of their counsel. When the mouth of the opposition had thus been closed, Parliament formally cancelled its oath of allegiance to the Papacy, and interdicted all appeal to Rome. Twelve monasteries were impropriated to the king, and to him the tithes from all ecclesiastical benefices were adjudicated. All the clergy who refused to acknowledge the king as supreme head of the Church were pronounced guilty of high treason, and to all those adherents of the pope who should seek to procure dispensation from Rome was decreed the punishment of imprisonment and confiscation of property, according to the ancient "Statute of *Præmunire*."² These laws were supplemented, in 1537, by the "Parish School Act," which

¹ With reference to Thomas Fitzgerald and his defection, comp. Leland, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. book iii. chap. 6, p. 140 *et seq.*; Froude's "History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada," vol. ii. pp. 293-325; also Bagwell, *loc. cit.*, vol. i. p. 163 *et seq.* p. 215.

² Concerning the Parliament of 1536, compare Leland, vol. ii. book iii. chap. 7, p. 172; Weber's "Geschichte der akatholischen Kirchen in Grossbritannien" (1845) bd. i. p. 599; also Bagwell, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 300. These laws are to be found in the Irish statute-book ("Statutes at large passed in the Parliaments held from 1310 to 1800," 20 vols. Dublin, 1786-1801), and among them this decree also appears, 28 Henry VIII. c. 4.

rendered the attainment of any ecclesiastical living dependent on a knowledge of the English language, and which, moreover, required every beneficed clergyman, on pain of losing his office, to establish English schools in his parish, and to teach the people to repeat the prayers in the English tongue.¹ In the framing of these laws Browne, Archbishop of Dublin, took an especially prominent part, and at the close of one of his parliamentary speeches, he pointedly declared that the man who did not share the king's views on these matters was not worthy to be called his faithful subject.² This characteristic declaration, as may be imagined, effectually put an end to all further opposition in the House.

But the decisions of a pliant Parliament, yielding to high pressure from the Crown, did not obtain the recognition of the country. The new Church regulations were in no single case voluntarily adopted within the Pale, to say nothing of more remote parts of the island, where British authority existed only in name. A portion of the Irish clergy, with Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh, at their head, in opposition to the Archbishop of Dublin, remained faithful in their adherence to Rome. When, at last, the bull of excommunication against Henry VIII. had been published by Pope Paul III., the successor of Clement VII., no means were left untried of placing difficulties in the way of the heretical king. Ireland was overrun with papal agents, whose business it was to fan the flame of opposition to the English monarch. One of these, a Franciscan monk, who at the moment of his arrest destroyed himself, had in his possession a document from the Bishop of Metz, addressed to the chieftain O'Neill, in Ulster, which contained an invocation in the name of Pope Paul III. to wage war with England. In this communication reference was made to an ancient prophecy, which declared that the prosperity of the Church was inseparably connected with the reign of Catholicism in Ireland.³ These strenuous endeavours

¹ Irish Statutes, 28 Henry VIII. c. 15.

² Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 166.

³ A copy of this communication is to be found in Leland, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 172; also in Warner's "History of the Rebellion in Ireland" (1767), p. 13.

did not fail of their effect, notwithstanding the cruel harshness of the steps taken by the Government, which, in one case, condemned a priest to the loss of his right hand, and to death at the stake,¹ for having written a tract in defence of the Papacy. Some of the national-Irish chiefs, among whom were the O'Neills, flew to arms, but this rising was not any more successful than the former one had been. Owing to the disorder which prevailed among them, and their want of military discipline, the rebels were completely defeated at Bellahoe, in 1539, by Lord Gray, who proceeded against the adherents of the ancient faith with an iron hand, destroyed numerous monuments to St. Patrick, and caused the venerable cathedral of Down to be burnt to the ground. But although he, more than any of his predecessors in office, had made the power of England to be respected by the Irish, he, nevertheless, could not avoid arousing the mistrust of his despotic master. He was suspected of having connived at the escape of the youngest brother of Lord Thomas Fitzgerald, was brought to trial on the charge, and ended his life on the scaffold.² Inspired with new courage by the execution of Lord Gray, the rebels renewed their efforts, which were, however, frustrated by the new viceroy, who utterly routed the forces of O'Neill and Morough O'Brien, and dispersed them into the forests. This was followed by the gradual submission of all the chieftains.

Quietness having once more been restored, Lord-Lieutenant St. Leger, in 1541, decided to summon a parliament. The object for which this parliament was convened was to abolish, with one stroke, any claims based on Pope Adrian's bull which the papal see might conceive it still possessed upon Ireland, and, at the same time, to strengthen the authority of the Crown. Instead of the title "Lord of Ireland" (*Dominus Hiberniae*), which, out of respect to the pope as supreme feudal lord, the monarch had hitherto borne, this parliament invested Henry VIII. and his descendants with the title of "Sovereign King of Ireland."³ A certain

¹ See MacGeoghan, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 299.

² Comp. Leland, vol. ii. p. 172.

³ See Leland, ii. p. 173, where may also be seen the proclamation issued at that time by the king; also Bagwell, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 258.

number of the Irish chieftains acknowledged this claim to royal dignity by special treaties, and as a means of permanently attaching these chiefs to the English throne, they were liberally endowed with secularised property, while, in compensation for having proclaimed their submission, they were created peers of the Irish Kingdom. These favours from the Crown were gratefully accepted by the nobles, whose subjection was probably facilitated by the fact that, notwithstanding the numerous changes which had been introduced in connection with their religion, the teaching of the Catholic Church had been left untouched, the main alteration consisting in the substitution of one form of ecclesiastical government for another.¹ English rule had now for the first time become something more than a mere name throughout the island, and during the life of Henry VIII. the country remained tranquil.

The death of this sovereign and the accession of the young King Edward VI. plunged Ireland into fresh disorder. The efforts of the king's council to spread the Reformation more widely through the British Isles produced a new revolt in Ireland, at the head of which were O'Connor and O'Moore, two barons of Leinster. St. Leger, the lord-lieutenant, however, quickly suppressed this rising; and the leaders, having been induced by an assurance of pardon to make their submission, were thrown into an English prison, an act of treachery and a breach of faith which aroused fresh exasperation in the minds of the Irish people.² It was no wonder, therefore, that the country received with general opposition the decree of Edward VI. ordering that the use of the Book of Common Prayer, which had been compiled in the year 1548, should be extended to Ireland. The common people remained firmly attached to the Mass; and were the less disposed to take kindly to the new liturgy, inasmuch as it was written in the English tongue, a language unknown to them. They paid little heed to the bishops appointed by the Crown, but they clung with devotion to the nominees of the

¹ This has been especially pointed out by Ranke in his "Englische Geschichte" (1870), bd i. s. 163.

² Comp. Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 189.

papal see. France, which at that time was in conflict with England, strove to incite the Irish to resistance, and sent Jean de Moutluc, Bishop of Valence, to Ireland,¹ with instructions to bring about an alliance between France and the Irish chiefs; but as, shortly afterward, peace was concluded between England and the French court, the machinations of this prelate were without result.

The Government, meanwhile, continued to pursue the course upon which it had entered; and in 1551, St. Leger, the lord-lieutenant, received strict commands from the Duke of Somerset, at that time Lord Protector, to introduce the Book of Common Prayer into all the churches of Ireland. In order to make this step less difficult for the Irish clergy, it was pointed out that the liturgy consisted only of selections from ancient forms of prayer which had been in use in the Church for ages. In further pursuance of this object, the lord-lieutenant, in the same year, summoned a national convocation to meet in Dublin. Archbishop Browne here declared that this command proceeded from the king, the bishops, and clergy of England, who had, he said, in the work of compiling the Prayer-Book, adhered closely to the Holy Scriptures; adding these significant words: "To whom (the king) I submit, as Jesus did to Cæsar, in all things just and lawful, making no question why and wherefore, as we own him our true and lawful king." The chief representative of this new departure was Archbishop Browne, of Dublin, who was supported by four bishops; but the majority of the prelates, with Dowdal, Archbishop of Armagh, at their head, left the hall.²

The Government now took more energetic measures. A special edition of the Prayer-Book was prepared for Ireland,—the first book printed in the island;³—and arrangements were made for its translation into the Irish tongue. A large proportion of the church livings had at this time passed over into the hands of clergy who were devoted to the Crown; but

¹ See Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 191; Ranke's "Französische Geschichte," i. p. 100; also Bagwell, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 345.

² Comp. Mant's "History of the Church of Ireland" (2nd ed.), vol. i. pp. 194-199; also Weber, *loc. cit.* (1853), bd. ii. p. 351.

³ See Mant, i. p. 205.

the people remained true to their former priests, and were the more scandalised at the proselyting zeal of the new incumbents, when they saw that, under the pretence of a desire to check superstition, they shamelessly plundered churches and chapels, among which was the venerable and ancient Abbey of Clonmacnoise. With the object of punishing the Archbishop of Armagh for his adherence to the old form of religion, the Primacy of Ireland was transferred from Armagh to Dublin, thus depriving him of the dignity of primate. Dowdal, however, remained steadfast to his opinions, and in order to escape further persecution, he resigned his bishopric and went to reside on the Continent.

But notwithstanding these proceedings on the part of the Lord-Lieutenant St. Leger, his conduct appeared to the ruling powers in England to be too forbearing. He was, therefore, recalled, and was succeeded by James Crofts, who received unequivocal instructions to enforce the completion of the Reformation in Ireland. He bestowed the archbishopric of Armagh, rendered vacant by the flight of Dowdal, upon a disciple of the new faith and a friend of Cranmer's, named Goodacre ; while the see of Ossory he conferred upon Bishop Bale, a very Hotspur of the Reformation.¹

These reckless measures evoked a spirit of intense dissatisfaction in the land,² and the difficulties of the situation for England were still further increased by a fresh national rising headed by Shane O'Neill, the son of the Earl of Tyrone, who had been richly endowed by Henry VIII. Irritated that the English supported the claims of his half-brother, Matthew, to the family inheritance, in opposition to his own, he took advantage of the prevailing discontent arising from Church reforms, to incite the country to insurrection. The whole of Ireland was in a state of extreme excitement, when the death of Edward and the accession of Mary suddenly produced a complete revolution in the aspect of affairs.²

¹ Concerning the transference of the primacy to the archbishopric of Dublin, see Leland, ii. p. 199 ; respecting Bale of Ossory, see Mant, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 220-225 ; also Bagwell, i. p. 380.

² See Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 203 *et seq.*

Scarcely had the announcement of Mary's accession been made when Shane O'Neill and the rest of the disaffected chieftains proclaimed their fealty to the Crown; while the Irish Catholics, who discerned in the new sovereign a patron of their religious views, celebrated her accession to the throne by processions and church festivals. Nor were their hopes disappointed, for Mary regarded it as her first and most sacred duty to restore the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church. The exiled bishop was, accordingly, reinstated in his diocese, and the archbishopric of Armagh was reinvested with its former supreme dignity. Those bishops who had been appointed under the Reformation were divested of office, and the married clergy were deprived of their livings. Bishop Bale, of Ossory, the most zealous adherent of the Reformation, was also removed from his diocese, and finding himself in continual danger of persecution from the populace, he fled to the Continent. Archbishop Browne, of Dublin, was likewise deprived of his see, and was succeeded by Hugh Curwin, formerly Chaplain to the Queen, who received emphatic commands to restore to Dublin cathedral all the pictures and church ornaments which had been removed by the Reformers.¹

In this reign Lord Fitzwalter was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and the charter of his investiture records that it was his determination to promote the glory of the Roman Catholic faith, to restore the authority of the papal see, and to render secular aid to the clergy for the punishment of heresy;² and that he should regard these as the most important duties of his office. In obedience to his summons a parliament assembled in June, 1556, which was of momentous importance. After the reading of the papal bull by Curwin, which granted absolution to the estates of the kingdom of Ireland, and received them anew into the bosom of the Church, all those laws which were passed by Henry VIII. against the apostolic see were abrogated, and the supremacy in spiritual matters was again vested in the pope, who, on his side, as a concession

¹ Comp. Mant, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 237 *et seq.*; Weber, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 384.

² See Mant, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 243; and Bagwell, i. p. 396.

to the Catholic monarchy, had already, in 1555, acknowledged the elevation of Ireland into a kingdom, which had been effected by Henry VIII.

As regards the ecclesiastical property of Ireland, Parliament did not re-establish the old order of things. Restitution was made of those church and monastic endowments which had devolved upon the Crown, but that portion of the appropriated property which had been sold to laymen was allowed to remain in the hands of the purchasers.

The ancient English statutes, "de comburendo hæretico," which had hitherto not been in force in the island, were now extended to Ireland,¹ and thus the Irish were provided with the means of proceeding against the disciples of the new faith with fire and sword; nevertheless, it cannot be denied that at this crisis the Catholics of Ireland acted with great moderation. There is nowhere any mention of religious martyrs in Ireland, and even in the capital, the adherents of the Reformed Church were at liberty to hold services conducted by their own clergy under the very eyes of the lord-lieutenant himself.² Ireland, therefore, remains free from the stain of those terrible scenes of bloodshed which were enacted in England, and which have earned for the queen the appellation of "Bloody Mary."

On the other hand, the system of confiscation which subsequently became so common, was, it is true, first adopted during this reign. When, after the suppression of the insurrection of O'Moore and O'Connor, their estates were about to be confiscated and occupied by English colonists, the native settlers resolutely refused to acquiesce in the arrangement, alleging that, according to ancient Irish law, the soil did not belong to the chieftain alone, but to the entire clan, and that the septs could not be deprived of their possessions on account of any crime committed by the head of their race. The English Government, however, disputed these conclusions, and, as the Celtic settlers continued in a state of disturbance,

¹ See Irish Statutes, 3 & 4 Phil. and Mary, c. 1, 2, 3, 4; Mant, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 244-247; Weber, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 385, 386.

² See Mant, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 248 *et seq.*

it proceeded against them by martial law. At the instance of Lord Fitzwalter a fearful massacre ensued ; the confiscation was declared to be legal, the estates were transferred to English colonists, and two new counties were created, whose names, King's County and Queen's County, with their towns, Maryborough and Philipstown, to-day remind us of the time of Mary, the wife of Philip the Spaniard.¹

Elizabeth's accession to the crown, in 1558, once more changed the entire situation. It is well-known how, in consequence of the impolitic attitude of several Catholic powers, who, desiring to place Mary Queen of Scots on the throne of England and Ireland, declined to acknowledge the daughter of Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth was driven to espouse the opposite side, and thus became a zealous promoter of the Reformation.² This change in the position of affairs speedily made itself felt in Ireland, without, however, causing a change in the lord-lieutenancy. Lord Fitzwalter, now Earl of Sussex, was certainly recalled, but it was only to return in a short time, as ardent a champion of the Reformation as he had formerly been of Catholicism, an example of the pliancy of the high functionaries of State in those days.

During his term of office the Parliament of 1560 was summoned, which sanctioned the extension of English ecclesiastical law to Ireland.³ The laws passed in Mary's reign against heretics were abolished ; jurisdiction in matters spiritual, as well as in those relating to first-fruits and tithes, was vested in the Crown, as was also the right to appoint bishops to the vacant sees. The oath of supremacy was once more demanded, and it was decreed that whoever should maintain the validity of any foreign authority in spiritual things should, for the first offence, be punished with the loss of all his offices, and his benefice, if he were a clergyman ; for the second, with

¹ For the law relating to the colonization of Queen's County and King's County, see Irish Statutes, 3 Phil. and Mary, c. 7, 8. Comp. Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 208.

² See Ranke, "Die römischen Päpste in den letzten vier Jahrhunderten" (Lpzg. 1874), i. pp. 203, 204.

³ The Acts passed by the Parliament of 1560 are to be found in Irish Statutes, 2 Elizabeth, c. 1, 2, 3, 4. Comp. also Mant, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 257 *et seq.*; and Weber, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 387, 388.

the confiscation of his goods according to the Statute of *Præmunire*; for the third, he should incur the penalty of death as a traitor.

This was followed by the Act of Uniformity, which appointed the use of the Book of Common Prayer, and ordained that the services of the Church should bear one uniform character throughout the land. Here, again, the refractory members of the church were threatened with severe penalties; but as the Irish clergy, as a rule, were unacquainted with the English language, the right was conceded to Ireland to use the Latin tongue in the liturgy and the administration of the sacraments.¹

One of the principal adherents of the Reformation was Loftus, the successor of Archbishop Dowdal in the see of Armagh. Under his direction there was published in 1566, "A Short Exposition of Some of the Chief Articles of Religion," which comprised the whole system of doctrine taught by the State Church of Ireland, according to the Thirty-nine Articles. To this declaration bishops and priests were required to subscribe, and to confirm their acceptance of it by oath.² Among the higher clergy these canons met with but slight opposition, and of the bishops only two refused to take the required oath of supremacy.³

The Irish people, on the other hand, remained faithful in their attachment to their old faith. One reason why the new doctrines proved so unattractive to the Irish was, that they were presented to them by their hereditary foes and oppressors. Moreover, it was all but impossible that the English, unfamiliar with the Celtic language, could exert any direct religious influence on the Irish mind, and equally impossible to expect that the Celts should comprehend the prayers compiled for their use in the English tongue. An attempt was,

¹ Comp. Mant, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 260; Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 225, note.

² See Mant, i. pp. 272-275; Weber, ii. p. 390.

³ Comp. Mant, i. p. 278. Mant's statement has recently been disputed by Brady in "The Irish Reformation; or, The Alleged Conversion of the Irish Bishops at the Accession of Queen Elizabeth" (Lond. 5th ed.), and his views have also been adopted by Bagwell in his "Ireland under the Tudors," ii. p. 367.

however, made to render the new teaching more accessible to the Irish by means of the language of the country. In 1571, Walsh, Bishop of Ossory, translated the Catechism into the Celtic tongue.¹ Shortly before his assassination, he also commenced the translation of the Bible; but it was long before a successor could be found to carry on his labours, and it was not until the last year of Elizabeth's reign that the work was completed.

As long, therefore, as no Irish Bible existed, the Reformation could with difficulty gain many followers in the country; but there was another circumstance which also greatly tended to retard the work of reform. Those bishops who, for the sake of retaining their fat livings, were prepared to change their faith at every nod from the powers above, were scarcely the best qualified persons to exert a salutary pastoral influence over their flocks, or to exercise the functions of spiritual overseers. For the most part they spent their incomes in England, giving themselves little or no trouble about their dioceses, an example which was followed by the majority of the better endowed rectors and vicars. But the poor curates, who were principally of Celtic nationality, and upon whom the duties of the pastor mainly devolved, clung in secret to their ancient form of religion, and frequently took advantage of their position to confirm the oppressed Irish people in the faith of their fathers, and in hatred of the luxurious Anglican prelates.

We can obtain no better picture of the condition of the Irish Church at this time than is furnished by the report which Sidney, the lord-lieutenant, presented to the queen on the 28th April, 1576.² In this despatch he states that out of 244 parish churches in the diocese of Meath, one of the best regulated districts in the country, there were 105 without a single resident clergyman; the glebe lands were let to farmers on long leases, and neither rector nor vicar resided on the parochial estate. The care of souls was usually confided to some

¹ Mant, i. pp. 293, 294.

² Sir Henry Sidney's report is to be found in Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 320 *et seq.*; Mant, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 298-301; and also, in part, in Froude's "History of England," vol. xi. p. 192.

wretched, ignorant curate, and of these curates it was found that only eighteen could speak English, the rest being Irish priests without either learning or education. These all maintained themselves from the altar dues, the receipts at the mass, confessors' fees, etc., sources of income which had, in fact, been formally abolished. Parsonages were all but non-existent ; in many cases the walls of the churches were falling into decay ; the windows and doors were broken, and some were without even a decent roof. If such was the state of the Irish Church in the best ordered diocese in the kingdom, it were easy to infer what must have been its condition in other parts of the country. Some districts were so irreligious that even the sacrament of baptism was not administered. This report, which at the same time suggested a remedy for the existing evils, was not without its effect. The queen made arrangements which were intended to bring about an improvement in the position of the Church in Ireland, but the disturbances of the following years prevented the carrying out of these peaceful designs.

The entire reign of Elizabeth was characterized by continual struggles between the Crown and the national-Irish chieftains ; and hardly a year passed in which some native princeling did not take advantage of the ill-feeling existing among the people towards England, to instigate to rebellion against the Government.¹

The first rising took place in 1560, under Shane O'Neill, chief of Ulster. He killed his brother Matthew, whose claims to the inheritance had been favoured by England, and was shortly afterward induced to lay down his arms, whereupon he decided to go to London and do homage to the queen in person. When, in 1562, he carried out his purpose, his attendants, as they walked bare-headed through the streets of the metropolis, with their saffron coloured shirts, long curling tresses, and shaggy garments, were the objects of general

¹ The most valuable source of information respecting the insurrections in the reign of Elizabeth is Camden's work, "Annales rerum Anglicarum et Hibernicarum regnante Elizabetha" (Lugd. Bat. 1625), although it is somewhat one-sided and too obviously the work of an Englishman and a Protestant, while, in some particulars, it also stands in need of revision.

wonder and amazement.¹ He now became, outwardly at least, the friend of England, and joined her in an expedition against the inhabitants of the Hebrides.² These apparently friendly relations were, however, but of short duration. In consequence of the Government having lent an ear to the grievances of some chieftains whom he had treated with haughty insolence, and who had sought protection from the English, he again, in 1567, rose in rebellion, and from this time his hatred of England knew no bounds. He renounced the titles of Earl of Tyrone and Baron of Dungannon, with which he had been invested by England; punished with the utmost severity any intercourse between his clansmen and the enemy, and even caused some Irishmen to be put to death for having had their bread made according to the English method.³ He entered into communication with Scotland, and offered the crown of Ireland to Mary Queen of Scots; but, as no help came from that quarter,—the Scottish queen having just at that time been forced by threats and violence to relinquish her throne,—Shane O'Neill was unable to keep the field, and accordingly fled into the forests, where, after having concealed himself for some time, he was finally assassinated while taking a repast. His estates were seized by the Crown, which, by this means, came into possession of the greater part of Ulster. It was now determined to carry forward the policy of colonization commenced in the reign of Queen Mary, and to assign portions of these confiscated lands to English settlers. The prospect of obtaining large tracts of fertile land without any considerable expense proved so attractive, that numerous English adventurers were found willing to migrate and settle in the sister isle. Accordingly, in the year 1572, a colony was planted at Ardes, in the east of Ulster, in which

¹ See Camden's "Annales," p. 69; comp. Froude's "History of England," vol. viii. p. 30 (1866, 4th ed.).

² This did not, however, prevent the viceroy making several attempts to rid himself of the formidable chieftain: it was first sought to entice him to Dublin by stratagem, in order that he might be there taken prisoner; and as this endeavour failed, an effort was subsequently made to compass his death by means of a present of poisoned wine. See Froude, viii. pp. 38, 49.

³ See Camden, *loc. cit.*, p. 128.

every British trooper was entitled to receive 240 acres of land, and every soldier of the line 120 acres. Although this particular project was a failure, and the prime mover in it, the younger Smith, belonging to the family of O'Neill, was slain, the colonization scheme was shortly afterward resumed on a comprehensive scale by Walter Devereaux, subsequently Earl of Essex.¹

Whereas the above-mentioned rebellion originated merely in the desire for independence experienced by one of the national chieftains, in those risings which now followed in Munster, foreign influence was at work. These disturbances, instigated by those Catholic powers which were hostile to Elizabeth, and encouraged by Spain and the Romish see, were of far more dangerous import to England than any of the national insurrections could possibly be, and were destined to have a much more fatal issue for the Irish people.

It is a matter of notoriety that no wish was dearer to the heart of Pope Pius V. than the desire to dethrone the Queen of England, and re-establish Catholicism in the land. To a crusade against England that venerable priest was willing to devote all the property of the Church, not excepting the chalices and the crucifixes, and was even prepared to conduct the expedition in person.² It will easily be understood by those acquainted with the energetic character of Pius V., that, in planning an undertaking of this nature, he largely set his hopes on Catholic Ireland, and that he did not fail to take into account every anti-English movement which occurred in the island. When, therefore, at the suggestion of William Allen in 1568, it was decided to bring the Catholic youth of Ireland into close association at the college of Douay,³ the efforts of which institution were mainly directed towards hindering the progress of the Reformation in the British isles, this enterprise gained the unqualified support of the pope. Rome likewise granted a hearty reception to all Irish refugees. One of these, a notorious adventurer named Thomas Stuckley,

¹ See Camden, *loc. cit.*, pp. 241, 256.

² See Ranke, "Die römischen Päpste," i. p. 244.

³ Comp. Sacchini, "Historia societatis Jesu," pars. iii. (Rom. 1649), p. 184.

having fled to the Continent in 1570, went to Rome and procured an audience of the pope. As he here professed to be able with 3,000 Italians to drive the English out of Ireland, he soon became a welcome guest at the Court of this rancorous prince of the Church.¹ This aggressive policy against England was also maintained by his successor, Pope Gregory XIII.; and his son, Giacomo Buoncampagno, born to him before his priestly consecration, having been named as the possible future sovereign of Ireland, Stuckley's designs found in him also a staunch friend. Stuckley was created Marquis of Leinster and Earl of Wexford, and 800 Italians were enlisted on his behalf, whose pay was guaranteed by Philip of Spain.²

Meanwhile, another Irish refugee had entered into negotiations with the papal see. James Fitzmaurice, after undergoing a term of imprisonment for having occasioned a revolt in Munster in the year 1573,³ ultimately quitted Ireland, and proceeded to France in the hope of inducing this power to render aid to the Irish; but speedily recognising the futility of his endeavours in this direction, he next turned his steps towards Spain, whose king, through the agency of his ambassador Mendoza, had already, in 1569, been in communication with the disaffected Irish. Here he was referred by Phillip II. to the see of Rome, with the result that Gregory XIII., mainly at the instance of two fugitive priests named Allen and Sanders, issued an edict calling upon the prelates, chieftains, gentry, and common people of Ireland to assist Fitzmaurice in his projected invasion, in return for which he engaged to grant them plenary indulgence, as was the custom at the time of the Crusades.⁴

English rule in Ireland was, therefore, in imminent danger. But Elizabeth was made aware of the projects of her adversaries, and she, accordingly, took the necessary measures of defence. Moreover, fortune favoured her in a remarkable

¹ Camden, *loc. cit.*, p. 193.

² Comp. Camden, *loc. cit.*, pp. 294, 295; Ranke, "Die römischen Päpste," v. p. 58 *et seq.*; also the autograph diplomatic despatch of Monsignore Segga, the papal nuncio at the Spanish Court.

³ See Camden, p. 255.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

degree. Stuckley, with the troops collected for Ireland, allowed himself quite unexpectedly to be persuaded to join the expedition of Sebastian, King of Portugal, against Africa, where he lost his life;¹ and hence Fitzmaurice was forced to take his chance single-handed. He landed in Kerry, in 1579, with eighty Spaniards and numerous English and Irish fugitives, and to these adventurous emissaries of the pope great masses of the Irish speedily joined themselves. Two chiefs of the house of Fitzgerald also cast in their lot with the rebels, though Gerald, Earl of Desmond, the actual head of the family, still held aloof. Fitzmaurice was shortly afterward killed in a skirmish, and was succeeded as leader of the insurgents by John Desmond, in whose interest the pope, Gregory XIII., issued another bull;² but he, too, was vanquished in an engagement with the British commander Malby.

— Hitherto the Earl of Desmond had taken no part in the rebellion, and had even congratulated the British commander-in-chief on his victory; but when Malby ordered him to appear before him, the earl, fearing treachery, refused to comply with the summons, upon which the English commander marched against Ashketyn, the castle of Gerald Desmond, burning on his way numerous farms, and killing everything that came across his path. This cruelty goaded the earl to insurrection, and he, too, raised the standard of rebellion against England.³ The contest now became less unequal; and while the fortified town of Carrickfoyle, which

¹ Compare the autograph diplomatic report of Monsignore Sega, the pope's nuncio at the Court of Madrid. This despatch, which covers eighty quarto pages, is in the Royal Library in Berlin (MSS. Bevölk. Ital. No. 29, fol. 309–389), and is of the very greatest moment, not only with regard to the expeditions of Stuckley and James Fitzmaurice, but also to the Spanish invasion of 1580.

² The bull of Pope Gregory XIII. to John of Desmond, bearing date 13th May, 1580, is contained in MacGeoghan, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 437, and has been thence transcribed by Hegewisch in his "Uebersicht der Geschichte Irlands" (1806), p. 281.

³ See Froude's "History of England," xi. (1870), p. 215 *et seq.* Just at this period (p. 303 *et seq.*) Camden is in many places inaccurate and confused, in one instance transferring the battle of Glenmalure to Glendalough. For the subsequent events the despatch of the nuncio Sega has again been utilised.

was occupied by Spanish soldiers, was captured by the English, and the garrison hanged ; on the other hand, the Earl of Desmond succeeded in defeating Arthur Gray, the new lord-lieutenant, at the battle of Glenmalure. After this victory Philip II. despatched another body of troops to Ireland, who landed at Smerwick in the year 1580, and proceeded to garrison the so-called "Golden Fort." But the success of the allies was at an end. Surrounded by the English soldiery and deprived of supplies, they were forced to retreat into the fort, whereupon the leaders and some of the officers were taken prisoners, while the main body of the troops was massacred in cold blood. Now that the Spanish auxiliaries were annihilated, every prospect of success for the movement had vanished. From this moment the whole of Munster was laid waste with fire and sword. Not a village nor a farmhouse in the revolted districts was spared ; neither women nor children, neither old men nor maidens, found mercy at the destroying hands of the ruthless English soldiers ; and where the sword failed, famine stepped in and completed the work of destruction. Not less than 30,000 persons are said to have died of starvation in the woods and forests of Munster at this time.¹ Of the two Desmonds, John had already fallen in open warfare. The earl himself was assassinated in a log cabin, in the year 1583 ; and the estates of both, as well as the possessions of the mass of the rebels, were seized by the Crown.

The area of the land confiscated in Munster at this period was 574,628 acres.² A portion of the forfeited territory was bestowed upon Englishmen of worth and influence, among whom were the distinguished Sir Walter Raleigh and the poet Spenser, who were both richly endowed with Irish landed property at this time. The remaining districts were parcelled out in grants to English colonists. To this end a proclamation was issued in every county in England, inviting younger brothers and sons, in consideration of a very trifling payment,

¹ This is the written statement of a prominent Irish official, Warham St. Leger, to Sir John Perrot, in the year 1582. See Froude, xi. p. 249.

² See Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 302 ; *ibid.*, p. 300, treats of the conditions to which the farmers were subjected.

to take possession of these Irish lands ; while they, in their turn, were required to bind themselves to maintain the garrisons at their own cost, and also to let their farms to Englishmen only. After the planting of this colony the conditions in Munster were for a long period unfavourable to the growth of seditious movements ; but, on the other hand, it is obvious that the prohibition against Irish farmers renting the land of English proprietors must have created a fresh feeling of irritation among those Celts who had hitherto abstained from all share in the disturbances.

The admirable administration of Sir John Perrot¹ who, from the year 1584, discharged the duties of viceroy, forms an agreeable contrast to the terrible scenes which were enacted in Munster from 1580 to 1584. He put an end to further bloodshed by proclaiming a general pardon ; and while he endeavoured to remove all grounds for religious controversy, and with this object counselled the queen to dispense with the oath of supremacy, he at the same time honestly strove to extend English law and English justice throughout the country. Connaught was, accordingly, divided into six counties, and sheriffs and judges were for the first time appointed to these districts. Ulster was also partitioned into seven counties, and many of the most prominent chiefs of the north, who had formerly settled their disputes relating to property by an appeal to arms, now declared their readiness to submit them to the jurisdiction of the courts of law.

In April, 1585, Perrot summoned a parliament to Dublin, which was attended by several Irish chieftains, who appeared, moreover, in English costume. During this parliament the lord-lieutenant made an attempt to repeal Poyning's Act, and as the provisions of this Act materially limited the power of the Irish legislature, he felt confident that, in taking this step, he would meet with the concurrence of the Irish House of Commons. But the representatives of the Pale were in favour of a different policy. To them, the members

¹ A special monograph of this administration exists, entitled, "History of the Government of Sir John Perrot" (Lond., 1626). Compare also Leland, ii. p. 192 *et seq.*; and, concerning his religious policy, Froude, *loc. cit.*, vol. xii. (1870), p. 197.

of the Privy Council, who, according to Poyning's Act, determined the scope of their legislation beforehand, were less to be feared than the lord-lieutenant himself, whose influence and authority would be considerably augmented by the repeal of this Act. They, therefore, resolutely opposed Perrot's scheme, and finally compelled him to abandon his purpose.

In the same year he applied himself to the regulation of land tenure in Connaught. The nobility and gentry of this province readily agreed to the terms of the "Composition of Connaught,"¹ by which they stipulated to accept patents from the Crown, and to pay a fixed ground rent; but, on the other hand, in virtue of these patents, they were to be exempted from all further uncertain taxes and imposts. The various clans, who had hitherto been dependent on the head of their race, were, at the same time, released from all obligations to their chiefs, and placed directly under the Crown. This measure, which may be compared to the liberation of the serfs in other states, was one of genuine statesmanship, and the only cause for regret was that its operation was limited to Connaught. The nobles did not, it is true, willingly forego their ancestral manorial claims, and, in fact, under the leadership of the De Burghs, they offered substantial resistance to this attack upon their rights; but after one of their leaders had been slain in the contest, and the other had been taken prisoner by the English, they were compelled to relinquish the struggle, and to tolerate the existence of free peasant proprietors in their midst.

Perrot also devoted considerable attention to the extension of education in Ireland, and under his government the scheme of founding a university in Dublin, which had first been proposed by Sidney, approached maturity. But his project of forming an endowment for the university, by appropriating the property of one of the principal churches in Dublin,

¹ See Siegerson's "History of the Land Tenures in Ireland," pp. 26-31. For information respecting Perrot's efforts in connection with the foundation of Dublin University, and his dispute with Archbishop Loftus, see Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 323 *et seq.*

aroused the hostility of Archbishop Loftus, who so employed his influence as to withdraw from the lord-lieutenant the favour of his sovereign. Perrot was recalled, and some time after was tried and executed on a charge of having been associated with certain Irish chieftains in conspiracy against the queen, and of having entered into relations with Alexander of Parma.¹

Perrot had endeavoured, by a policy of moderation, to do justice to the Irish people, but his successor, Fitzwilliams,² like too many of his predecessors, was harsh and cruel in his dealings with the Celtic nation, false to his word, and faithless to his obligations. Several of the Irish chieftains he thrust into prison, two of whom were devoted to the Government, while others only retained their liberty by the payment of a bribe. These violent measures evoked such a feeling of animosity throughout the country that one chief after another took up arms, among others Brien O'Rorick, in Connaught, and O'Donnell, the chieftain of Tyrconnel; and at last, in 1594, Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, the nephew of Shane O'Neill,—who until now had always been found on the side of the English, and had consequently, in 1587, had restored to him by Elizabeth the family title and possessions,—impelled by personal grievances, also joined the rebels.³ The position of the English in Ireland was considerably aggravated by the disaffection of these powerful chieftains. The British forces under Lord Norris and the Earl of Ormond, which were sent out against Hugh O'Neill, proved ineffectual; indeed, at the battle of Blackwater, in 1598, the English suffered a defeat, losing their commandant, General Bagnall, and leaving four-

¹ See Camden, *loc. cit.*, p. 594.

² Comp. the opinion of Gardiner, in his "History of England from 1603 to 1616" (Lond., 1863), vol. i. p. 367.

³ For the insurrections in the latter years of Elizabeth, in addition to Camden, Hollinshead's "Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland" contain valuable information; of the greatest importance, however, is Fynes Moryson's "History of Ireland from 1599 to 1603; to which is added a Description of Ireland" (2 vols., Dublin, 1625). This period is also treated in a work by Thomas Stafford, "Hibernia Pacata: or, History of the Late Wars in Ireland during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth" (2nd ed. 1820).

teen colours in the hands of the enemy. In consequence of this victory, the whole of Connaught rose in arms, and the rebellion also extended to Munster. Tyrone himself entered into negotiations with the King of Spain ; and, by means of his agents, he skilfully represented his successes in the most glowing colours, and requested this monarch's assistance in order to secure to himself the results of his victory.

Elizabeth, however, redoubled her efforts to maintain English supremacy in the land. She levied large bodies of troops, and, her last general having proved himself unequal to the occasion, she conferred the supreme command upon her favourite, the Earl of Essex. But, even in his hands, the course of events was not more fortunate. Prior to his appointment as commander-in-chief, he had taken exception to the military tactics of his predecessor, especially blaming him that, instead of transferring the theatre of action to Ulster, and there vanquishing the Earl of Tyrone at the source of his strength, he had confined his operations to other provinces, and squandered the royal forces in conflicts which brought neither glory to himself nor advantage to the Crown. It was expected, therefore, that under his leadership a vigorous campaign would follow ; but he, too, wasted his resources in Munster and Leinster, and when at last, at the urgent command of his sovereign, he marched into the north of Ireland, he sustained such a defeat that he was compelled to enter into negotiations with the leader of the rebels. Nor were the demands made upon the earl by the rebel chieftain of Ulster inconsiderable. The conditions upon which alone Tyrone would consent to a cessation of hostilities were : a general amnesty ; liberty for the free exercise of religion ; the restoration of confiscated property ; and the transference of all civil offices in the land to the Irish, with the exception of the lord-lieutenancy, which was allowed to remain in the hands of the English. Notwithstanding the magnitude of these demands, Essex, fearing a Spanish invasion, recommended their acceptance. The queen, however, emphatically declined to entertain them, and with the object of endeavouring to induce her majesty to regard these stipulations more favourably,

Essex quitted Ireland and went to London, where, as is well known, he was brought to trial.¹

Shortly after the departure of Essex, the first instalment of pecuniary aid for the Irish insurgents arrived, and about the same time a papal emissary, in the person of a Spanish priest, delivered to the "Prince of Ulster" a crest of consecrated plumes, accompanied with the pope's blessing. From this time, Hugh O'Neill regarded himself as the appointed champion of the Catholic faith, and, accordingly, in November, 1599, he issued a manifesto to all his fellow-countrymen, in which he summoned them to abjure the degrading tenets of heresy, and to take up arms with him in defence of the freedom of their country and of the Catholic religion.² In acknowledgment of this action, Pope Clement VIII. immediately afterwards granted a solemn and plenary indulgence to all the followers of Hugh O'Neill.³

Meanwhile, the new lord-lieutenant, Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, had arrived in Ireland in February, 1600, when an entirely new method of warfare was forthwith adopted. To quote the words of Gardiner, the historian, "Mountjoy made war with the spade rather than with the sword."⁴ Forts, with temporary defences, speedily occupied every commanding position, and blocked every defile. Although these forts were not heavily garrisoned, they were well provisioned, and, therefore, capable of offering a prolonged resistance to the rebels. With the view of reducing the insurgents by starvation, the coinage was debased and the admission of foreign money into the country rigorously prohibited. At a low rate of exchange, this debased coinage could be exchanged in London for current coin of the realm, but the owners of the money were required to produce an

¹ Concerning the unfavourable judgment passed upon his predecessor in command by the Earl of Essex, see Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 353: also Ranke's "Englische Geschichte," bd. i. p. 337. For the further conduct of the war by Essex, and his treaty with O'Neill, see Moryson, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 80-90.

² The manifesto is to be found in Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 364.

³ A copy of the papal brief is contained in MacGeoghan, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 548; also in Hegewisch, *loc. cit.*, p. 288.

⁴ Comp. Gardiner's "History of England, 1603-1616," vol. i. p. 369.

attestation of their loyalty.¹ The embarrassments of the Irish thus increased. Soon discontent began to manifest itself among their own ranks, and some of the chiefs of Ulster deserted the national cause, while the system of bribery practised in the south by George Carew, Lord-President of Munster, helped to spread the disaffection.

The situation had thus materially changed to the disadvantage of the Irish; and although there appeared for their succour in the harbour of Kinsale, under the command of Don Juan del Aguila, a new Spanish armada conveying 3,400 men, whose numbers were augmented by the followers of O'Donnell, and by O'Neill, who marched through Leinster to join them, this assistance came too late. Lord Mountjoy concentrated his forces, to the number of 15,000, around Kinsale, and completely invested it. After enduring a siege of about three months, and after a storm which cost the Spanish commander nearly 1,000 men, Juan del Aguila, on 12th January, 1602, surrendered the port of Kinsale to the enemy.² On engaging not to bear arms against England again during the present war, the Spanish soldiers were permitted to return to their native country, whither they were accompanied by O'Donnell, who thus quitted the land of his fathers, and settled in Simancas, where he was soon joined by many of his compatriots. From this time is dated the alliance between the shamrock and the olive, rendered famous by the beautiful songs of Thomas Moore.

Unable longer to maintain the contest, Tyrone fled into the forests of Ulster, in which province Mountjoy continued the war in the same spirit of ferocious cruelty in which Carew was devastating the south of Ireland with fire and sword. In the county of Tyrone alone about 3,000 human beings died of starvation at this time; while between Tullaghoge and Toome, a distance of fifteen miles, close upon a thousand corpses were found lying unburied. A vivid idea of the extent to which

¹ See Gardiner, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 371, 372; Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 379.

² See Camden *ad. a.* 1602; also Stafford's "Hibernia Pacata"; for the emigration to Spain, comp. also the "Annals of the Four Masters," ab. 1602.

famine reigned in the land may be gathered from the following description by an eye-witness :—“ No spectacle was more frequent in the ditches of the towns,” says Moryson in his account,¹ “ and especially in wasted countries, than to see multitudes of these poor people lying dead, with their mouths all coloured green by eating nettles, docks, and all things they could rend above ground.” It was not mere exaggeration, therefore, when the commander-in-chief, in one of his despatches to the queen, wrote : “ Your Majesty has nothing to rule over in Ireland but ashes and carcases.”²

Thus surrounded on every hand by famine, Hugh O'Neill saw that it was impossible to continue the struggle, and, accordingly, announced his readiness, under reasonable conditions, to take the oath of allegiance. Unwilling to return to a policy of negotiation with the insurgents—a policy for which she had visited Essex with her royal displeasure,—and yet weary of carrying on a war which was swallowing up so large a portion of the revenue, while, at the same time fearing another Spanish invasion, Elizabeth hesitated long before she finally gave her consent to this course. At last, however, having received his sovereign’s assent, Mountjoy entered into negotiations with Tyrone at the abbey of Mellifont, and on the 31st March, 1603, a treaty was concluded, according to the provisions of which Tyrone renounced the title of “ The O’Neill,” and abjured all his foreign alliances, especially the league with Spain ; in return for which he received a free pardon, the restitution of his property, and the right to the free exercise of his religion for himself and his family. But the conclusion of this compact was not witnessed by Elizabeth. Seven days before it was ratified, this monarch, who had played so illustrious a part in the history of the British isles, passed from among the living.³

¹ Comp. Moryson, bk. iii. chap. i. p. 200 ; consult likewise Leland, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 410, who gives some interesting statements relative to the stupendous advance in prices which took place after the close of the contest.

² Comp. Leland, ii. p. 287.

³ Comp. Moryson, *loc. cit.*, bk. iii. p. 300 ; also Leland, ii. p. 408.

CHAPTER III.

IRELAND FROM THE DEATH OF ELIZABETH UNTIL 1641.— THE PERIOD OF COLONIZATION, AND OF THE SYSTEMATIC LAND SPOILIATION.

WITH the accession of James I., British rule was once more, after long and bloody struggles, as we have seen, established over the whole of Ireland. But the new monarch found, on ascending the throne, that a very crude state of things existed in the interior of his Irish kingdom. It devolved upon him, therefore, to organise a regular administration in the recently-subdued districts. The establishment of a new order of things was, however, not accomplished without harsh and severe measures, the result being that the commencement of the reign of the first Stuart was marked by fresh rebellions.

These disturbances, which, unlike former risings, did not originate with the various chiefs, but took their rise in the towns, began in the first year of his reign. It was in the towns that the injurious effects of the debased coinage, of which mention was made in the foregoing chapter, were most palpably experienced, and it was, consequently, here that the greatest amount of irritation was felt. Another cause of complaint was that the military forming the garrisons were quartered on the inhabitants; and a final grievance was a religious one. The majority of the urban population consisted of Catholics, who, believing that in King James, the son of Mary Queen of Scots, they detected a secret disciple of their own faith, imagined that they had, on this account, the right to give vent to their dissatisfaction with Anglicanism. Accordingly, in some of the towns, the disturbances began by burning the Book of Common Prayer, and openly celebrating the mass; while in other places, as in Cork, they commenced

by the citizens refusing to lodge the soldiery. In these cases Mountjoy displayed his wonted energy. Waterford, whose inhabitants pleaded their ancient privileges in vain, he forced to capitulate, and shortly afterward Wexford and Cork also submitted. The mutineers were treated with comparative leniency, the ringleaders alone being handed over to martial law.¹

Quietness having been again restored, Lord Mountjoy obtained his long-desired release, and was succeeded in the lord-lieutenancy by George Carew. When Mountjoy returned to London, he was accompanied by Hugh O'Neill and Roderic O'Donnell, the latter being the brother of the chief who had settled in Spain, and there died. They were graciously received by James I, who ratified the agreement which restored to O'Neill his family title and possessions, and also invested O'Donnell with the dignity of Earl of Tyrconnell.²

During Carew's short term of office he was principally occupied in establishing order in the country and in securing the administration of the laws of the realm, to accomplish which ends a decree, ordering the disarmament of the population, was issued ; and now, for the first time in the history of Ireland, assizes were held in Ulster, presided over by English judges. This new institution gained the hearty goodwill and approval of the Irish lower classes, who earnestly entreated the judges to return and again dispense justice in the land.³

On February 3rd, 1605, Carew was succeeded by Sir Arthur Chichester, a man of conspicuous energy and eminent statesmanship, whose administration exercised a marked influence on the country. While, in order to maintain peace, he, on the one hand, enforced the prohibition of his predecessor against

¹ For the earlier portion of the reign of James I., Gardiner's "History of England, 1603-1616" (2 vols., Lond., 1863), chaps. vii., ix. is particularly valuable, being a work the material for which has been in a great measure derived from manuscript sources, and whose authority is especially based on the correspondence of Chichester, the lord-lieutenant. For the disturbances in the towns, see vol. i. pp. 372-378 ; also Moryson, vol. ii. p. 330 *et seq.*; and Leland, vol. ii. p. 413 *et seq.*

² Comp. Leland, ii. p. 417 ; and Moryson, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 345.

³ See Gardiner, vol. i. p. 387.

the carrying of arms, and visited with severe penalties every contravention of the law; he, on the other hand, proclaimed a general amnesty, at the same time engaging to take the poor under his especial care, and defend them from injustice. According to this proclamation, all farmers were to be protected in the occupation of their farms and insured against ejection and arbitrary arrest; and it finally declared that the Irish were no longer followers or dependants of a native lord or chief,¹ but henceforth free subjects of His Majesty James I. This dissolution of the union between the chieftain and his clan, although it secured the poor against the oppression of the powerful nobles, had a result which was not wholly beneficial. By a decision of the highest legal court, the King's Bench, the system of a community of property and a common right of inheritance, which had formerly prevailed among the Celts, was pronounced illegal;² and thus all claims to the property of the clan, which had hitherto been possessed by its single members, were, at one stroke, declared to be null and void, a decision which inflicted undeniable hardships on the indigenous population.

At the commencement of this administration ecclesiastical questions demanded much of the lord-lieutenant's attention. In the early part of his reign, the king had been disposed to show toleration to the Catholics, but alarmed by the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, he gradually assumed a more hostile attitude towards Catholicism; and on July 4th, 1606, he published a proclamation ordering the banishment of all Catholic priests, and urging the enforcement of the Recusant Act, a law enacted in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which imposed a fine of one shilling on every person who absented himself from the services of the Anglican Church. The aldermen of the city of Dublin were, accordingly, summoned to appear before the Castle Chamber, a court corresponding to the Star Chamber in England, when a decree, with penalties attached, was issued against all negligent churchgoers. But although

¹ See Gardiner, vol. i. p. 390-393.

² Comp. "Carte's History of the Life of James, Duke of Ormond" (Lond., 1736), vol. i. p. 13.

coercive measures were adopted against those who objected to pay the fines, there were but few conversions to record as the consequence of these rigorous steps; on the contrary, they only resulted in arousing fresh hatred and contumacy. Chichester, therefore, changed his policy. He abandoned all attempts to convert the Irish by force, and, as he wrote to the Privy Council, centred his hopes mainly on the education of the rising generation; while as one means of winning over the people to the Anglican Church, he caused an Irish translation of the Book of Common Prayer to be printed and distributed throughout the land.¹

Meanwhile, the chiefs of Ulster viewed these methods of organization with ill-concealed annoyance. Tyrone especially disapproved of the English administration of justice, and had already, at the beginning of the reign of James I., refused to admit the sheriff into his county. In May, 1606, therefore, Chichester wrote to Salisbury, secretary of state, that it was impossible that the province of Ulster could ever be in a happy condition until it was placed under the well-regulated administration of a president and council. Thereupon Tyrone, who had obtained information of the viceroy's plans, wrote to the king on 17th June, 1606, that he "would rather spend the rest of his days in banishment than be placed under any other government than that of the king and his lord-lieutenant."² This feeling of resentment between the viceroy and the Ulster chief was intensified by the attitude of Chichester with regard to a dispute which arose between the Earl of Tyrone and his principal vassal, in which the viceroy was prepared to espouse the cause of the latter. The relations existing between them were thus strained to the utmost, when suddenly, on 18th May, 1607, a letter was found at the door of the Castle Chamber, containing the intelligence that a plot had been formed by Tyrone, Tyrconnell, and some other northern chieftains, to murder the lord-lieutenant, and to seize Dublin Castle. This communication was supported by the

¹ A detailed account of the disorders which took place in the Irish towns in connection with ecclesiastical questions is to be found in Gardiner, vol. i. pp. 398-408.

² *Ibid.*, i. p. 408.

statement of a witness, not, it is true, entitled to much credence, who declared that he had been told by the Provincial of the Irish Franciscan monks in the Netherlands, that in Ireland everything was ripe for revolt ; that assistance was expected from Spain ; and that large sums of money had already been collected which were to be handed over to Tyrconnell. It will, of course, always remain a matter of controversy whether the information thus afforded rested upon any basis of truth ; but the fact that both of the earls precipitately fled from the country, and repaired to the Continent, necessarily caused them to be regarded with additional suspicion by the English Government.¹

Owing to the belief which prevailed among the English population of Ireland in the existence of a secret understanding between Spain and the two fugitive earls, and, consequently, in the imminence of a Spanish invasion, Chichester felt called upon to take the necessary precautionary measures in Ulster. He caused the garrisons to be strengthened in the north, and suspicious persons to be arrested ; and, in order to conciliate the lower orders, the king issued a proclamation,² in which he expressly and emphatically stated that it was not his intention to take any steps whatever against the Catholics on account of matters of faith.

The flight of the two earls, and the subsequent confiscation of their property, presented to Chichester a favourable opportunity for carrying out his long-cherished scheme of planting a new colony on a large scale. Shortly after his accession to office, in a letter to Salisbury, secretary of state, he wrote that "it was absurd folly to run over the world in search of colonies in Virginia or Guiana, whilst Ireland was lying desolate. The reformation and civilization of such a country would, in his opinion, be a greater honour for the king than if he could lead his armies across the channel, and could reduce the whole of France to subjection."³ The nature of the plan which it was his desire to see realized may be clearly gathered from a

¹ For O'Neill's conspiracy, see Gardiner, *loc. cit.*, vol. i. p. 416 *et seq.* ; also Leland, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 423.

² A copy is to be found in Leland, vol. ii. p. 425.

³ See Gardiner, vol. i. p. 380.

statement which he forwarded to the English Privy Council on the 17th September, 1607 : " Let the king," he wrote, " at once take into his own hands the country which had been vacated by the earls, and let it be divided amongst its present inhabitants. Let every gentleman in the country have as much land as he and all his tenants and followers could stock and cultivate. Then, when every native Irishman had received his share, and not till then, let the vast districts which would still remain unoccupied be given to men who had distinguished themselves in the military or civil service of the Crown, and to colonists from England and Scotland, who might hold their lands upon condition of building and garrisoning castles upon them. By this means everything would be provided for. The country would be put into a good state of defence at little or no expense to the Government, and the Irish themselves would be converted into independent and well-satisfied land-holders, who would bless the government under which they had experienced such an advance in wealth and prosperity.¹

The attention of the lord-lieutenant was temporarily diverted from the realization of this scheme by a new revolt. In 1608, Cahir O'Dogherty, the youthful and inexperienced Lord of Innishowen, took up arms against the Government, obtained possession of the Fort of Culmore, and set fire to the town of Derry, the latter act, however, completing the list of his achievements. At the command of Lord Chichester, General Wingfield marched into Ulster, made a sudden attack on O'Dogherty's property and plundered his estates ; and, the Irish chieftain shortly afterward falling in a skirmish with Wingfield, this rash enterprise came to an end.²

Peace having again been restored, the viceroy had now leisure to devote to the execution of his designs in regard to the colonization of Ulster. His plans differed from all preceding ones, in so far as they were conceived in a spirit of justice towards the Irish, and did not aim at punishing the people for the disaffection of their chiefs. He drew up a

¹ See Gardiner, vol. i. p. 422.

² For Dogherty's insurrection, comp. Leland, vol. ii. p. 428 ; also Gardiner, vol. i. pp. 429-434.

careful memorandum¹ containing a detailed account of the condition of the six counties of Ulster, namely : Derry, Donegal, Armagh, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Tyrone; in which he also further elaborated the principles of the scheme suggested in his letter of September, 1607. On 14th October, 1608, this document was delivered to Lord Chief Justice Ley, and Davies, the Attorney-General, who were deputed to lay it before the English Privy Council. Accordingly, when a commission was appointed in London to devise a plan for the colonization of the province of Ulster, Ley and Davies took an active part in its deliberations. Here, however, Chichester's scheme was completely remodelled, and it was determined that the above counties should be settled by colonists from England and Scotland, and retired members of the military and civil services, while the Irish should be excluded as much as possible.

Davies, the attorney-general, was a man possessing remarkable qualifications for the position he filled ; but he was a man, to use the words of Gardiner, "who forgot that it was better to carry a small measure of reform with the will and consent of the people, than a large one by force." He it was who overthrew the original plan of Sir Arthur Chichester, and effected the exclusion of the Irish. He was impelled to adopt this relentless, and at the same time unwise, policy, by the desire to divest all future disturbances of a dangerous character, by forcing the Irish out of every position which might be capable of offering any resistance. These views were shared by the celebrated Francis Bacon, subsequently lord chancellor, at that time occupying the post of solicitor-general, who, believing that Ireland was in a state of absolute anarchy, and being desirous of putting an end, with one blow, to the disorders prevailing in the island, supported, in his report to the king in December, 1608, the plan suggested by Davies, without, for a moment, taking into consideration the sentiments of the native population.²

In the early part of the year 1609, the prospectus of the Government colonization scheme, which proved to be an

¹ See Gardiner, vol. i. p. 550 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 552-554.

almost complete embodiment of the recommendation of the commission, was made public, with the object of attracting adventurers. The lands were divided into allotments of 1,000, 1,500, or 2,000 acres, which were distributed, not according to Chichester's plan, to the Irish in the first place, but to English and Scotch colonists to the extent of 150,000 acres ; in the next place to the servants of the Crown, who received 45,000 acres ; leaving 70,000 as the portion of the Irish. Moreover, the English and Scotch settlers were prohibited from transferring their allotments to the Irish, and from allowing them to reside on their property as tenants : thus, the Celts were not only unfairly dealt with in the partition of the land, but they were likewise placed under disabilities.¹

Accordingly, in the year 1610, the settlement of Ulster was carried out in the appointed manner ; but the regulations of the Government aroused such an amount of discontent among the Irish population, that Chichester was compelled to increase the garrisons in this province. Nor was this dissatisfaction by any means unjustifiable. Although, with a stroke of the pen, the Court of King's Bench had abolished the ancient brehon law, it had not removed from the minds of the people their deep-rooted convictions respecting the justice of their claims. The view still prevailed among them, that the land belonged, not to the individual heads or chiefs of a race, but to the race itself,—and that the crimes of a chieftain could never with justice he avenged on the innocent members of his clan. But the course which had been pursued by the Government was in strict contravention of this principle. Of the territory which had been just distributed, only one-fourth part had come into the hands of the Irish ; and, as if from a determination to deprive the disinherited Celts of every means of shelter and defence, and to establish pauperism as a settled institution in the land, the Irish were even excluded from renting the farms to whose absolute possession they deemed themselves entitled. But this violation of justice by the English was destined to be sorely revenged.

It is, however, not to be denied that the agricultural in-

¹ See Gardiner, vol. i. pp. 555, 556.

terests of the province were greatly advanced as the result of the fresh settlement, and the improved cultivation of the soil which ensued. As regards intelligence, energy, and capital, the new colonists had, on the average, a decided advantage over the former proprietors ; and although the opinion of Davies,¹ the attorney-general, when he compares the newly colonized territory to the Promised Land, is scarcely to be regarded as coming from an unbiassed source, the fact of the agricultural prosperity of the country is corroborated from other quarters. The settlement made by the City of London Company,² which on 27th January, 1613, was endowed by royal charter with the rights and privileges of a corporation, attained to an especially flourishing condition ; and it was this company which rebuilt the towns of Derry and Coleraine, after they had been burnt down during the rebellion, the memory of which Londonderry still retains in its name.

In order to give the sanction of law to the numerous changes which had been effected, James resolved to summon an Irish Parliament, an event which had not occurred for a period of twenty-seven years ; and with the object of insuring a majority for his views, he created forty new boroughs, a step which gave rise to fresh excitement in the country. The Irish Catholics, or recusants as they were now called, on account of their refusal to take the oath of supremacy, began to fear that it was the intention of Parliament to extend to Ireland the operation of the penal laws which had been enacted against Catholicism in England. This alarm appeared to be the less groundless, inasmuch as the puritanical element had received a considerable accession through the advent of the Scotch settlers, who were imbued with an intense hatred of Catholicism. When, therefore, it was reported that Parliament had been convoked, six Irish recusant nobles made certain representations to the king ;³ these, however, being disregarded,

¹ In the treatise, “Discoverie of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely Subdued.”

² See Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 434.

³ For the history of the Parliament of 1613, comp. Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 441–458 ; also Carte’s “History of the Life of James, Duke of Ormond” (3 vols., 1735–1736), a work which, on account of the mass of material

the Catholics resolved to make strenuous efforts to secure a majority at the election. Immediately after the new Parliament met on 18th May, 1613, a violent struggle ensued respecting the choice of the speaker. The candidate of the Crown, the now familiar Davies, having been elected, the party of recusants declined to take any part in parliamentary business, and the excitement attained so great a height that the lord-lieutenant deemed it best to adjourn the House until further notice.

But this action of the viceroy by no means calmed the minds of the people, inflamed, as they were, by religious passion. While the Puritans were urgent in their demands for more stringent measures against Catholicism, the Catholics sent a second embassy to the king to justify the stand they had taken, and to entreat him to show toleration to their religion. The king granted an audience to the deputation, and, according to the assurance afterward given by one of its members, the monarch declared that he would do no violence to any man's conscience, and that he would hinder no man having a Catholic priest in his house, provided only that those priests were excluded who accorded to the pope the right to excommunicate and depose the king. A declaration such as this, however, was ineffectual to appease the storm of excitement which was then raging; on the contrary, its vehemence still increased when the lord-lieutenant, unable to reconcile this announcement of his master's principles with his general policy, or with the instructions he had himself received, accused the bearer of the message of treachery, and caused him to be imprisoned. This dispute was not adjusted until 1615, when the Catholics abandoned their opposition to the newly created boroughs, as well

contained in it, and the care with which it has been collected, is absolutely indispensable for the history of this period. In 1851 a new edition was published in Oxford, in which, however, the paging of the original edition has been retained. The Parliament of 1613 is treated in vol. i. pp. 19-22. The remonstrance of six Irish recusant peers is to be found in Leland, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 443 *et seq.*; also in Plowden's "Historical Review," vol. i., App. p. 56. Gardiner's new work, "The History of England from the Accession of James to 1642," which comprises, and is a continuation of, the work referred to in note 1, page 36, has, unfortunately, not been accessible to me.

as to the speaker nominated by the Crown ; in return for which they were exempted from any further penal enactments.

— Parliament now proceeded to business. It declared Tyrone and Tyrconnell to be convicted of rebellion ; ratified the grants of lands in Ulster ; and voted subsidies to the king. At the same time it abolished those statutes which prohibited marriage, business transactions, and other forms of intercourse between the Irish and the English.

The last named measure of the Parliament betrayed, to a certain degree, a desire for closer relations with the Celtic race ; and had this course now entered upon been still further pursued, the Irish might possibly, in time, have forgotten the glaring infringement of the laws of right and justice which was committed at the colonization of Ulster. Above all things, justice ought to have been dispensed with an even hand, and the native population, who, as Davies testified, more than any other people under the sun prized and valued an impartial administration of justice,¹ should, at least, have had the satisfaction of knowing that, under the protection of English laws, they could henceforth enjoy the fruit of their toil in peace and security. Unfortunately, the course of events revealed a very different aspect of affairs. The greed for Irish land among the English at home was insatiable, and the rebellions and the consequent confiscations being now at an end, it became necessary to try other means of obtaining possession of Irish landed property. In the words of Burke, the English statesman, “The war of chicane succeeded to the war of arms.”² A number of dangerous people, who earned for themselves the name of “Discoverers,” made it their business to examine into the validity of the titles by which the old landed proprietors held their estates ; and in case of the discovery of any flaw or defect in the same, to give notice of this to the commission appointed by James for the partition of the land. Were the owners not able to produce and lay before this court the whole of their title deeds, they forfeited

¹ See Davies’ “Discoverie,” etc., pp. 200, 201.

² Burke’s letter to Sir H. Langrishe, in “Works” (Lond., 1808), vol. vi., p. 336.

their estates, a portion of which passed to the informer. This lucrative profession aroused the cupidity of others, and soon every register and every record had been narrowly scrutinised by them. Even those landowners who were in possession of their deeds of purchase, or their patents, frequently fell victims to the machinations of the "Discoverers." If it were found, for instance, that there rested certain taxes on an estate, payable to the Crown, but for which, during the distractions of the Elizabethan age, no demand had been made, the owner was now required to produce the receipt for those taxes, and should this not be forthcoming, the commission declared the estate to be confiscated.¹ These "subtle plunderings," as Burke designated them, grew more frequent from year to year, and more especially after the recall of Lord Chichester, which took place in 1616. In Longford alone twenty-five proprietors were forced from their estates without any compensation whatever ; and a case which occurred in County Wicklow was even more scandalous than these. It was that of a landowner named Byrne, whom it was desired to rob of his estate by the methods above described. These methods, however, proving unsuccessful, the agents did not hesitate to prefer a criminal charge against him, and to bribe false witnesses in order to effect the confiscation of his property.²

But a yet greater evil was perpetrated when the Crown itself adopted the system of the "Discoverers," and pursued to still greater lengths their methods of violence for the acquisition of Irish land. In carrying out the provisions of the "Composition of Connaught" effected under the administration of Sir John Perrot (p. 29), some of the transactions had been but imperfectly carried out, the proprietors having frequently neglected to have their surrenders registered, or to take out their patents and pay the necessary fees. In order to rectify these shortcomings, James I., in 1616, appointed a commission to supply the failing surrenders, and to issue new patents. Although the landowners, on their part, gladly seized this opportunity to strictly fulfil all their obligations,

¹ See Carte's "Life of Ormond," vol. i., pp. 25-28.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 27-32.

and faithfully paid the fees that were demanded of them, the functionaries of the Court of Chancery, nevertheless, neglected at the time to make an accurate register of the documents. This formal defect, which was entirely chargeable to the officials of the Court of Chancery, the estate owners being perfectly innocent in the matter, was, however, now made the occasion of a course of action which was devoid of every trace of statesmanlike sagacity, and one which could only have been dictated by the meanest avarice and the most sordid greed of territory. The Government caused the collective titles of Connaught, which were not fully and adequately registered, to be pronounced invalid, and declared the whole of the land so voided to be still in possession of the Crown. It is not to be wondered at that this violation of justice should have aroused the greatest excitement and the wildest consternation among the landed gentry of Connaught, who, apprehensive that it was the purpose of the Crown to introduce into Connaught a scheme of colonization similar to the one which had been adopted in Ulster, endeavoured, in their terror, to secure their position by promises of money. They offered to pay to the king, in return for the ratification of their titles, a double annual composition, as well as a gross sum of £10,000.¹ But James I. was prevented from accepting this proposal by his death, which occurred in 1625.

When his successor, Charles I., ascended the throne, he found Ireland in a state of the greatest commotion and distraction. The landowners of Connaught were still threatened by the perils we have just mentioned, and were casting about for some means by which they might be enabled to retain their estates. In the year 1628, therefore, the Irish landlords offered to the king, through Lord Falkland, the new lord-lieutenant, the sum of £120,000, on condition of obtaining certain "graces,"² which should insure to them their property, and protect the Irish Catholics from penal enactments. The landowners of Connaught were, especially, to be secured from all further intrigues by a fresh registration of their titles; and

¹ Comp. Carte's "Life of Ormond," vol. i. p. 47 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 52 *et seq.*

an undisturbed possession of sixty years should guarantee them against all older claims. It was, moreover, stipulated that the tyranny of the ecclesiastical courts should be restricted ; the free exercise of religion be permitted ; and that the right be conceded to Catholics to appear as advocates in the courts of law without being required to take the oath of supremacy. The king accepted the proffered sum of money ; issued instructions to the lord-lieutenant enjoining upon him to fulfil the stipulated conditions, and promised that during the next Parliament the titles of the landowners should be confirmed.

This manifestation of indulgence by the Government on questions of religion did not, however, meet with the approval of the Protestant population of Ireland. It was not only the Puritans settled in the north, who denounced these regulations as favouring Catholicism, but the High Church prelates also set their faces against them. An assembly of the chief dignitaries of the Irish Church, held in Dublin under the presidency of Archbishop Usher, declared that it was a grievous sin to extend toleration to Catholics, or to consent to their being allowed the free exercise of their religion ; and that if, in consideration of money payments,—an unmistakable allusion to the transaction effected between Charles I. and the Catholics,—forbearance should be exercised towards them, that would be equivalent to selling religion for gold, and would constitute a still more heinous offence. Owing to these influences, and partly also in consequence of the complaints made by the English Parliament respecting the spread of Irish Catholicism, Lord Falkland published a proclamation on 1st April, 1629, in which he prohibited the practice of the rites and ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church.¹

Falkland, however, had not yet done enough to satisfy the ardour of the anti-Catholic zealots, and, as they were continually besieging the king with lamentations over the increase

¹ For the attitude assumed by Archbishop Usher with regard to this question, consult especially Bernard's "Life of Usher" (1656); concerning the prohibition of Romish rites and ceremonies, see Carte's "Life of Ormond," i. p. 53, and Leland, iii. pp. 4, 5.

of popery, the sovereign ultimately sacrificed his minister to the intrigues of his opponents. Falkland was recalled in 1629, and pending the arrival of the new viceroy, the administration was placed in the hands of two lords chief-justices, Viscount Ely and Richard Earl of Cork, lord high-treasurer. During this period the antagonism existing between Puritanism and the High Church on one side, and Catholicism on the other, attained its greatest height. While divine service was being held in one of the Catholic churches of the Irish capital, the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, accompanied by some soldiery, forced his way into the building and attempted to disperse the congregation. This attempt being resisted by those who were assembled for worship, a fight ensued in the church, in which the Protestants were finally worsted. The consequence of this truly Irish excess, however, was that the English Privy Council caused fifteen Catholic churches to be closed, and transferred the use of the newly established Catholic seminary in Dublin to the Protestants.¹ And, so long as this administration remained in power, the same narrow-minded spirit of persecution and oppression prevailed.

Not until 1632, when Thomas Wentworth, afterward the renowned Lord Strafford, was created Viceroy of Ireland, was a different policy adopted towards the Catholics.² It is true, that he, too, in his correspondence, has expressly stated it as his opinion that the Crown can never be secure or safe until one uniform mode of divine worship prevail throughout the land;³ but, involved in other and far-reaching schemes, he hesitated to arouse the displeasure of the united Catholic population of Ireland, and, therefore, abstained from any direct interference with their religious concerns.

It is matter of history that Thomas Wentworth originally

¹ See Leland, iii. pp. 5-7.

² For the administration of Wentworth, Strafford's own letters, published by Knowler (2 vols. fol., Dublin, 1740), are of primary importance. An appendix has been added to the work in the form of a biography, written by Radcliffe, under the title of an "Essay Towards the Life of my Lord Strafford." A more recent representation of that illustrious man has been furnished by Forster in his "Statesmen of the Commonwealth of England" (New York, 1846).

³ See Strafford's "Letters," ii. p. 39.

entered the lists as the champion of the parliamentary opposition, and that after the famous Petition of Right he transferred his allegiance to the side of absolute monarchy, to which he was now unreservedly devoting all his powers. Charles I. quickly discerned his energy, and his eminent talents as a statesman, and appointed him to the distinguished position of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; and it was during his tenure of office as viceroy that he attempted to establish absolutism in Ireland, in order that, by the thereby enhanced power of the monarchy, he might be enabled to turn the scale in favour of a despotic government in England. And, never at a loss in the choice of his expedients, he contended for his scheme with an energy and a recklessness characteristic of the man. In the prosecution of his ends, he treated some of the most influential English noblemen resident in Ireland with the utmost indignity, simply with the object of intimidating them, at the outset, from any further opposition. One of them, Lord Mountnorris, was even condemned to death on a charge of sedition and mutiny, merely for having made use of a disrespectful expression with reference to the lord-lieutenant, the representative of the sovereign.¹

In Parliament he was equally impatient of opposition. When, in 1634, he summoned both Houses of Parliament, he so contrived matters that neither the recusants nor the Protestants had any considerable preponderance in the House of Commons,² and he was thus enabled, by setting one party in opposition to the other, the more surely to rule both.

In the same manner every longing of the Irish Protestant Church for independence was suppressed by Wentworth. According to his views, supreme authority in Church matters belonged absolutely and unconditionally to the king. He, therefore, abolished, in 1634, the "Irish Articles," which granted some concessions to Puritanism, and which had been introduced by Archbishop Usher in the reign of James I., and,

¹ See Leland, iii. p. 35; Carte's "Life of Ormond," i. p. 84.

² For this point a letter from Strafford to Coke is particularly important (Strafford's "Letters," i. p. 259), the greater portion of which is also to be found in Plowden's "Historical Review," i. p. 122.

at the same time, he united the Irish Established Church indissolubly with that of England.¹

But above all things he considered it to be his duty to increase the army, which had hitherto been in a disorganised condition, and to put it in a state of complete efficiency ; in order to do this, however, it was of the first importance to augment the revenue of the Crown, and in pursuance of this object he disdained no means. He extorted large sums of money from the Catholics by reminding them that, in case their contributions were too niggardly, there still existed laws against the Papists which could easily be put into operation again. The City of London Company, which some years before had effected the colonization of Londonderry (p. 43), was suddenly called to account for not having fulfilled the stipulations contained in its charter, and condemned to pay a fine of £70,000. In the same spirit he conceived the idea of obtaining additions to the royal exchequer by a fresh settlement of Connaught ; and, accordingly, he induced the Government, regardless of the engagements made some years previously at the granting of the "graces," to re-assert the claims it had formerly advanced to the possession of this province.

And now, as in the worst days of James I., there again prevailed the old system of investigation into the validity of the titles by which the landed gentry of Connaught held their estates. Such persons as were practised in disinterring these unregistered titles were looked upon with favour, and as a means of inciting to more vigorous efforts, a premium of twenty per cent. on the receipts realized during the first year by the confiscation of property thus imperfectly registered was guaranteed to the presidents of the commission. With a cynical frankness, Wentworth declared that no money was ever so judiciously expended as this, for now the people entered into the business with as much ardour and assiduity as if it were their own private concern. That, at least, the appearance of justice might be maintained, the cases were decided by juries, to whom, as if in mockery of all impartial

¹ See Carte, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 83, 84; Ranke's "Englische Geschichte." bd. iii. p. 263.

administration of justice, direct instructions were given to return a verdict to the effect that all the titles in Connaught were vested in the king. Most of the juries, intimidated by threats, delivered the desired verdict, but one jury in Galway made answer to this request with a fearless "No." What, however, were the consequences to these men? The sheriff who had summoned the jury was condemned to pay a fine of £1,000; and the jurymen were brought before the Castle Chamber, where they were required to declare that, in giving their verdict, they had committed perjury. Refusing to do this, each of them was sentenced to suffer the confiscation of his goods, to pay a fine of £4,000, and to be kept in prison until the fine was paid.¹

Wentworth had thus demonstrated that, as he himself acknowledged in one of his letters, his darts could inflict cruel wounds, even deadly ones.² The second Galway jury, rendered timid by the fate of their predecessors, returned the required verdict; and from this time the collective titles of the province of Connaught were at the unlimited disposal of the lord-lieutenant; and, although, notwithstanding this result, he, at the last moment, recoiled from the final act, and shrank from ejecting the present owners, and re-settling the province, it was not from any conscientious scruples that he refrained from taking this last decisive step: to the man whose motto was "Thorough," such scruples were unknown. Nor was it the disapprobation of his monarch which held him back from the perpetration of this unrighteous deed, for that Charles I. entirely approved of the policy of his lord-lieutenant may be justly inferred from the fact, that shortly after this he created him Earl of Strafford. No; it was practical considerations alone which induced Wentworth to pause in the path upon which he had entered. Just at that time the Crown

¹ For the proceedings against the gentry of Connaught, Strafford's "Letters" are of the first importance (vol. i. pp. 310-352, 442, 443, 45¹, 454; vol. ii. p. 41); also Leland, iii. pp. 30-37, and Carte's "Life of Ormond," i. p. 80 *et seq.*

² Compare the letter to Wandesford: "I am full of belief they will lay the charge of Darcy the Sheriff's death unto me; my arrows are cruel that wound so mortally; but I should be more sorry by much the king should lose his fine." See also Hardiman's "History of Galway," p. 105.

was engaged in a contest with Puritanism in Scotland, while, in England, the attempts of Charles to make his rule absolute had produced a state of public feeling which was in the highest degree critical ; hence, it would have been nothing short of wanton folly to call up a rebellion also in the third kingdom, a result which must certainly have followed had he proceeded to eject the landed gentry of Connaught from their estates. In view of these considerations, therefore, Strafford postponed the colonization of the western province to a more favourable season.

While we turn with just abhorrence from the contemplation of the reckless and despotic acts of this remarkable man, we must not, on the other hand, fail to acknowledge that his administration has features which present a brighter aspect. As we intimated above, in the exercise of a certain toleration, dictated, it is true, only by policy, he declined to meddle directly in the religious affairs of the Catholics.¹ His greatest merit, however, consists in having advanced the material well-being of the country. He took a lively interest in agriculture and cattle-rearing, and by causing the rude and antiquated methods of husbandry which prevailed among the Irish agriculturalists to be superseded by more modern appliances, he contributed very materially to the advancement of this branch of industry. He also largely encouraged navigation, in consequence of which the number of Irish ships increased from year to year ; and although it cannot be denied that he endeavoured to suppress the trade in woollen cloth, from an apprehension that it might come into dangerous competition with English manufactures, he, nevertheless, sought to compensate the Irish in other ways, and the development of the Irish linen industry in the north was essentially his work.²

Nor did the Crown fail to reap an advantage from the growing prosperity of the country. The Irish revenue annually increased, and the customs returns alone were trebled during the administration of Lord Strafford. He was, accord-

¹ See p. 49.

² Concerning Strafford's solicitude for Ireland's material prosperity, see Hume's "History of England" (Lond., 1811), vol. vii. p. 202.

ingly, in a position to place at the disposal of his royal master a standing army of 9,000 men, by means of which he was, at the same time, enabled to prevent any rising of the native population, and to hold in check any parliamentary opposition on the part of the English and Scotch colonists. It was, therefore, no idle boast, but a statement in strict accordance with the truth, which he made when writing to Archbishop Laud on 16th December, 1634: "I can now say that the king is here as truly absolute as any sovereign in the world can be." At a time when in England the aspect of affairs was decidedly threatening, and the people were already beginning to manifest their hostility to absolutism, even in the year 1640, the Irish assemblies acted in complete harmony with his wishes. Without any demur they voted him, on March 23, four subsidies for the war against the Scotch insurgents; and in the preamble to the bill they eulogised the administration of Strafford, and overflowed with expressions of gratitude to a monarch who had sent them a governor so vigilant, so wise, and so just.¹

When, therefore, Charles I. recalled his faithful minister from Ireland, where he was supported by a well organised army and a parliament which offered him not the slightest opposition, and sent him to England to confront a nation bitterly exasperated against absolutism, it was a gross political blunder. Strafford himself, it is recorded, rebelled against this mandate, and more than once counselled his master to allow him to remain in Ireland, where, at least, he could be of service to him. Subsequent events showed how correct was his estimate of the situation. On 10th November, 1640, Strafford arrived in London, and on the following day, in the House of Commons, this valiant champion of absolute monarchy was impeached by Pym of high treason.

The trial of Strafford² began in the House of Lords on the 22nd of March, 1641. The Irish House of Commons, which

¹ See Plowden's "Historical Review," i. p. 129.

² See Rushworth's "Historical Collections," viii. ("Trial of the Earl of Strafford," Lond., 1700). Details respecting the attitude which the Irish Parliament assumed with regard to the proceedings of the English legislature against Strafford are given by Plowden.

but a short time previously had applauded the administration of the lord-lieutenant, now, that the mighty ruler whom it had once feared was a fallen hero, signified its approval of the action which was being taken against him. It explained that the very laudatory reference to Strafford contained in the preamble to the subsidy bill, which had been entered in the journal of the House during the last Parliament, had been surreptitiously introduced by the lord-lieutenant or one of his partisans, while it also declared that the present unhappy condition of Ireland was to be attributed to the "illegal, arbitrary, and tyrannical administration of Strafford"; and it deputed representatives of the Irish Commons to be present at the trial. Sundry items in the Bill of Impeachment had, in fact, reference to his Irish administration. The very first article charged him with having attempted to establish an arbitrary and tyrannical government in Ireland, contrary to the laws; and in particular, that he had treasonably counselled the subjugation of England by the aid of the Irish army; while a further indictment stated that he had employed his influence and authority to countenance and encourage popery. His proceedings in connection with the jurors of Connaught were likewise adduced against him, and among the numerous accusations included under this head, was the charge that, at his instigation, the jurymen, who had delivered a true verdict according to their consciences, were condemned by the Council Chamber, subjected to heavy fines, and in some cases to plunder; that certain of them, even, had their ears cut off, their tongues bored, and others were branded on the forehead with a hot iron. The issue of the trial is well known. A Bill of Attainder was passed, and Strafford was sentenced to death; and on the 11th of May, 1641, meanly deserted by his sovereign, this last unscrupulous champion of despotism in England ended his life on the block.

Such were some of the consequences of Strafford's recall. But the king had not only by this step delivered his devoted servant over to the vengeance of his enemies; he had, at the same time, exposed to imminent peril his own royal supremacy

in Ireland. For while, immediately after Strafford's departure, the English and Scotch colonists, for the most part, went over to the side of parliamentary opposition, and, as we have seen, on the question of the impeachment made common cause with the English House of Commons, the native Irish, perceiving, on the one hand, that the firm, strong administration was now no more, and that, on the other, England itself was being violently rent in twain by internal party strife, imagined that the favourable moment had at length arrived for crushing English influence in Ireland. They, accordingly, commenced preparations for that terrible revolution which was destined to be, for Ireland, the cause of frightful suffering and unspeakable calamities.

CHAPTER IV.

IRELAND FROM 1641 TO 1660.—THE PERIOD OF THE GREAT IRISH REBELLION, AND THE COMPLETE SUBJUGATION OF THE COUNTRY BY CROMWELL.

ON the recall of Strafford from Ireland, the government of the country was entrusted to the Lords Justices Sir W. Parsons and Sir John Borlase, the most unfortunate choice which the king could have made. Both men were creatures of the Puritans, and under their administration the House of Commons, which in Strafford's time had been wholly on the king's side, was soon won over to the opposition, and the authority of the royal name became undermined. Moreover, one of the lords-justices, Sir William Parsons, had formerly been one of the most formidable of the "Discoverers," and had taken a leading part in the notorious action against Byrne¹ (p. 46). When, therefore, a man of this character, who during the time in which he had filled a subordinate post, had made it his business to rob the Irish of their possessions, was called to occupy the foremost position in the land, it is not surprising that among the Irish population, and especially among the inhabitants of Connaught, the most lively apprehensions should have been aroused lest there was about to be initiated a fresh series of confiscations and a redistribution of the land. That these fears were not groundless may be deduced from the fact that when Charles signified his intention to make a formal

¹ For a general estimate of Parsons' character, see Warner's "History of the Rebellion and Civil War in Ireland" (Lond., 1767), p. 49; for the part he took in connection with the trial of Byrne, comp. Carte's "Life of Ormond," i. pp. 27–32. Recently, it is true, an attempt has been made by Miss Mary Hickson, in "Ireland in the Seventeenth Century; or, the Irish Massacres" (Lond., 1884), to present the character of Parsons in a more favourable aspect.

ratification of the “graces,”¹ by granting a commission to the lords-justices, these functionaries contrived to prevent the bill being placed upon the statute book by an adjournment of Parliament.

But other dangers seemed to be approaching for the Irish. It is no secret that in their conduct towards the Catholics, the Puritan party, especially, were inspired by the wildest fanaticism ; and it was just this party which at that time preponderated in the Long Parliament in England, and now threatened, through the influence of the highest officers of the Crown, to become dominant also in Ireland. Should the ascendancy of the Puritans last, then the fears of the Irish Catholics, who constituted an overwhelming majority of the population, that no toleration would be extended toward their religion, would certainly be realized. Many indications existed that this would be the case. The English House of Commons had already expelled all Papists from the army, and had demanded of the king that two-thirds of the land of all Catholic recusants should be confiscated. Pym, one of the leaders of the English Puritan party, boasted—at least so it was reported in Ireland—“that the Parliament would leave not a single popish priest in Ireland.” Addresses were presented in the English House of Commons by Irish Presbyterians, praying for the extermination of popery in Ireland ; indeed, rumour went so far as to say that Parsons himself had prophesied at a public banquet that, within a year from that time, not a Catholic would be found in the island. It was, accordingly, not a matter of wonder that from the Puritan *régime* the Irish apprehended the complete proscription of their faith.²

This double dread—of losing their property and of having to suffer persecution and oppression for their religion—was the essential cause of the rebellion, but there were also other

¹ This commission may be found in Plowden’s “Historical Review,” i., App. p. 86 ; comp. also i. p. 131.

² For the position which Puritanism occupied with regard to Catholicism, comp. Carte’s “Life of Ormond,” i. pp. 160, 182, 199 *et seq.* : 235 *et seq.* Pym’s assertion is to be found in “An Impartial Collection of the Great Affairs of State, from the Beginning of the Scotch Rebellion,” by Nalson (1683), vol. ii. p. 536.

circumstances which favoured it. The conduct of the English in Ulster was not forgotten, nor could it yet be remembered without pain. When we, therefore, take into account the fact that the old wound was still rankling, and recollect that an unwise policy had been striving for many years to raise still higher the wall of partition between Irish and Anglo-Saxon ; and when, finally, we bear in mind that the example of the Scotch, who had just taken up arms in defence of their religion,¹ must naturally have excited the emulation of the Irish, we shall not marvel that the Celtic nation, deeming the moment in which England was agitated by internal conflict one too favourable to be lost, should rise up and endeavour to shake off the shackles of Anglo-Saxon rule in their country.²

¹ Carlyle has drawn attention, in forcible language, to the fact of the Scottish rebellion serving as a model for the imitation of the Irish. See “ Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations ” (Lond., 1871), vol. i. p. 103.

² The sources of our information respecting the revolution of 1641 are abundant, but turbid in the extreme. Not only the work of Lord Clarendon, Anglican and royalist (“The History of the Rebellion in Ireland,” ed. 1740, Lond.), but also the narratives furnished by the two Puritans, Sir John Temple, who was a member of the Privy Council, and Master of the Rolls in Dublin (“The Irish Rebellion,” Lond., 1646), and Edmund Borlase, who was brother of the lord-justice (“History of the Execrable Irish Rebellion,” Lond., 1680, fol.), are pervaded by the bitterest hatred of the Irish race, and abound with exaggerations and one-sided statements (see Ger. ed., p. 318). Of the accounts which come to us from Catholic sources, the memoirs of Castlehaven (“Memoirs of Touchett, Earl of Castlehaven,” Lond., 1684) have been written in a calm and temperate spirit, and deserve, for the most part, to be regarded as authentic ; nevertheless, having been compiled from memory, and at a considerable time after the occurrence of the events recorded, they require, in some particulars, to be revised ; whereas another contemporary historical work, which has, however, only recently been published (“A Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland, now for the first time published by Gilbert, 1871”), is marked by fanaticism, and is not free from exaggerated statements and even false assertions. Burke was, accordingly, fully justified in saying that, in almost all parts of it, the rebellion had been extremely and most absurdly misrepresented (“Correspondence,” i. p. 337). An effort was made, it is true, during the last century to refute some of the assertions made by Clarendon and Temple. Thus, on the side of the Catholics, Curry dealt a hard blow at the old traditions maintained by these writers in his “Historical and Critical Review of the Civil Wars in Ireland from the reign of Queen Elizabeth to the settlement of King William” (Dublin, 1786) ; while among Protestant historians, Carte, in the work to which reference has so often been made, and Warner, in his “History of the Rebellion in Ireland” (1767), have preserved an unprejudiced and dispassionate judgment. But none the less are the

There was no lack of men to take the lead in the movement. The real originator of the rebellion was Roger O'Moore, a poor, but talented, descendant of one of the oldest Irish families, who had allied himself with some of the chiefs of Ulster, more particularly with Phelim O'Neill and Cornelius McGuire. According to the plan of the conspirators, Dublin Castle, with its ample stores of ammunition, was to be seized by O'Moore and McGuire, while a simultaneous attack was to be made by Phelim O'Neill upon the English landowners in Ulster, who were to be driven from their estates. The day fixed upon for the rising was 23rd October, 1641. In consequence of Parsons having been forewarned of the plot by an Irish Protestant named Owen O'Conolly, the assault on Dublin Castle proved abortive. O'Moore was enabled to escape, but McGuire fell into the hands of his enemies. In Ulster, where, as we above remarked, the insurrection had been organised by Phelim O'Neill, the outbreak took place on the appointed day. By means of a forged document, which purported to be a public proclamation from the king,¹ and represented the rebellion as having the express sanction and approval of the sovereign, O'Neill contrived to carry all the waverers along with him. The Celts rose in a body, and the excited multitude forcibly, and in many cases not without bloodshed, ejected the English landowners from their property.

English historians of the seventeenth century, and especially those of them who are animated by party spirit—as Clarendon

historical works of later times still too much under the influence of the one-sided representations of Clarendon and Temple, and even so cautious an investigator as Ranke, in his “Englische Geschichte, vornehmlich im 17. Jahrhundert” (Bd. II. Lpzg., 1870), has not entirely escaped the contagion; while at a still more recent date, the national antipathy and hatred of Catholicism have put forth fresh and vigorous shoots in Froude's work on “The English in Ireland” (1872). An acknowledgment of indebtedness is, therefore, due to Lecky for having in the second volume of his “History of England in the Eighteenth Century” (Longman, Green & Co., 1879), pp 123–175, devoted a section to combating the widely-prevalent misrepresentations which exist with regard to this event.

¹ Since Hume wrote his “History of England” (Lond., 1811, vol. vii. p. 245 *et seq.*), the theory of forgery has been pretty generally accepted. Before his death, O'Neill himself solemnly confessed that Charles I. was in no way implicated in the rebellion. (See the declaration of Dean Ker in Nalson's “Collections,” ii. p. 529.)

and Temple—represent the rebellion in Ulster as having been inaugurated by a systematically planned slaughter of the unsuspecting English inhabitants, in the course of which, according to various authorities, 40,000, 50,000, and even 105,000 victims perished.¹ All contemporaneous accounts, however, even the letters of the lords-justices themselves, give the lie to these statements, and prove, on the contrary, that comparatively few murders took place, that the real object of this rising was merely to eject and plunder the English, and that the story of a deeply-laid scheme of massacre is absolutely without foundation.

Equally false are the representations of several narrators who describe the rebellion as a Jesuit plot, and as having been planned by the Catholic priesthood.² It would, indeed, only have been natural, at a time when there was a prevailing belief among the populace that the highest authorities in the land aimed at the extermination of Catholicism, had the

¹ This number is given by Temple in "The Irish Rebellion" (1646), p. 106. Clarendon asserts that the victims numbered 50,000; but in my opinion, Lecky has conclusively proved, in his "History of England" (ii. pp. 128-153), that no such massacre occurred. He relies, in part, on a letter of Lord Chichester, dated October 24, in which, although written immediately after the outbreak of the rebellion in Ulster, he reports that he has heard of the murder of only one man. Moreover, the letters of the lord-lieutenant, notwithstanding the detailed description which they give of the plunder and the pillage committed, contain no reference to any such wholesale murder as that represented by these figures. In fact, in a pamphlet published at that time by an Episcopalian clergyman, which is referred to by Prendergast in his "Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland" (Lond., 1865, p. 5), it is expressly stated that a massacre was indeed, intended, but that it was not carried out. Warner, also a Protestant clergyman, and, therefore, a witness equally removed from every suspicion of partiality, and who had carefully examined all the various estimates, says that, according to incontrovertible testimony collected within two years of the outbreak of the rebellion, the total number of persons who had been killed amounted only to 4,028. In face of such statements, the high figures already quoted cannot be sustained, nor can the estimate of Miss Mary Hickson in the above-cited work, which gives the number of the victims as 27,000 (a computation which has also been adopted by M. Brosch, "Oliver Cromwell und die Puritanische Revolution" (Frankf., 1886), p. 220, possibly be supported by evidence.

² This supposition is combated by Lecky in his "History of England," vol. ii. p. 168 *et seq.*; the same question has recently been discussed in an article on "Die Haltung des katholischen Clerus bei dem Ausbruch der irischen Rebellion," which appeared in the "Historisch-politsche Blätter" (1885), p. 340 *et seq.*

Catholic clergy placed themselves at the head of the movement. But the details which are supplied to us tend to show that, at the outbreak of the rebellion, the question of nationality, far more than that of religion, occupied the forefront. Carte, the conscientious biographer of the Duke of Ormond, who has scrupulously and carefully examined all the documents of that period, asserts that only about two Irish priests knew anything at all about the rebellion at its commencement.¹ In fact, it would appear that where the Catholic priests were in any way concerned in the insurrection, their influence was exerted rather to soothe and allay the excitement than to aggravate it. Without adducing any further evidence in confirmation of this assertion, we shall content ourselves with appealing to the testimony of a contemporary writer intimately acquainted with the existing circumstances, who, by his own personal relations to the events of that period, inasmuch as he was son-in-law, as well as biographer, of the Anglican Bishop Bedell, who lived some months a prisoner among the rebels, is certainly not open to the suspicion of having favoured Catholicism. This writer, whose name is Clogy, cannot forbear expressly mentioning that during the bishop's captivity he was allowed full liberty for the spiritual exercise of his religion, being permitted to pray and to preach and to worship God according to his own will, "although, in the next room, the priest was acting his Babylonish mass." He further states that the Catholic bishop carried out, without any demur, his wish to be interred in the graveyard of the cathedral, that the Irish Catholics formed a guard of honour at his funeral, and discharged a volley over his grave; details which, trifling as they are, plainly indicate how little the Irish were inspired by religious fanaticism. But, in addition to this, Clogy directly states, that "the Irish hatred was greater against the English nation than against their religion"; that "the English and Scotch Papists suffered with the others, and that the Irish sword knew no difference between a Catholic and a heretic."²

¹ Carte's "Life of Ormond," ii. p. 266; comp. Lecky, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 166, 167.

² Clogy's "Life of Bedell" (1862), pp. 174, 175.

When we keep in view, therefore, the prominence given to the national aspect of the rebellion, the position primarily assumed by the Irish rebels towards the Scotch colonists is not difficult to understand. Although, as rigid Puritans, the Scotch colonists were decidedly more adverse to the Catholics than were the majority of the English, yet, at the beginning of the rebellion they enjoyed perfect immunity from all molestation; indeed, the rebels issued a proclamation which forbade the insurgents, on penalty of death, to injure a Scot, either in life or property,¹ and this not out of regard to their numbers or military skill and equipments, but because they believed that in certain emergencies they could rely on the support and aid of this kindred race. It was only when they saw that the Scotch allied themselves with the English, that the rebels directed their hostilities also against them.

With the exception of an agrarian insurrection in County Wicklow, where the Byrne family had been so outrageously robbed of their property, the rebellion was originally confined to the province of Ulster. Greater dimensions were, however given to it by the unwise and unprincipled policy of the lords-justices, who desired to see the Irish as extensively involved in the revolt as possible, in order that the consequent confiscation of goods might be on a correspondingly wide scale. Thus, it was a grave political mistake to postpone the meeting of Parliament from November 17, 1641, the day for which it had been summoned, until February 24 of the following year, by this means depriving the nation of the opportunity to present its grievances in a loyal and constitutional manner. Still more unfortunate was it that they demanded from the Catholic nobles of the Pale the surrender of their arms at the very time at which the insurrection broke out in Wicklow. Deprived of their weapons, and no longer able to defend themselves against the encroachments of the rebels, it was not surprising that the landlords of Leinster felt themselves compelled to enter into negotiations with the insurgents. But that which was most effectual in driving the Catholic nobility of the Pale, already smarting under the ill-treatment of the

¹ See Warner, *loc. cit.*, p. 75 ; also Plowden, i. p. 138.

Puritan authorities, completely into the arms of the rebellion, was the fatal decree of the English Parliament, passed December 8, 1641,¹ which commanded that no toleration should henceforth be shown towards the Catholic religion in Ireland. The alliance between the men of the Pale and the Irish of the north was determined upon at the assembly of Tara Hill, 24th December, 1641.

The rebellion now spread through the whole of Leinster. Fresh masses of Irish landowners were forced into the camp of the rebels by the enactment of the English Parliament of February, 1642, which, by directing that two and a half million acres of Irish land should be granted to English adventurers in compensation for sums of money lent to the Irish Parliament,² opened up the prospect of a fresh ejection of the Irish and the planting of a new colony. The leaders of the Catholics again attempted to negotiate, and addressed a petition to the king in the form of a remonstrance,³ in which they enumerated the various kinds of persecution to which they were subjected on account of their religion, and prayed for redress, otherwise protesting their loyalty in every respect. This remonstrance was delivered to the commissioners appointed by the sovereign at Trim, 17th March, 1642; but, as it failed to obtain the Irish any relief, the consequence was that the rebellion continued to spread. Munster, and finally Connaught, where Lord Clanricarde, himself a Catholic, had long succeeded in maintaining peace, also became involved in the movement. The war now began to assume a far more cruel and savage character than it had hitherto borne, and after the lords-justices had issued orders to the English officers to

¹ See Borlase, "History of the Execrable Irish Rebellion," p. 34. M. Brosch, in "Oliver Cromwell," p. 223, proves, from a despatch of Guis-
tinian, the Venetian Envoy, dated 22nd Nov., 1641, that a report was in circulation among the Puritan members of the Parliament to the effect that it was the intention of Pope Urban VIII. to employ the troops which he had been ostensibly raising for service against Parma for the protection of the Irish Catholics; and to this fact may, perhaps, be ascribed, if not the cruel decree itself, at least the precipitation with which it was promulgated.

² Comp. Warner, *loc. cit.*, p. 174; also Carte's "Life of Ormond," i. p. 301.

³ To be found in "Plowden," i. App. No. 28, pp. 86-101.

give no quarter,¹ its horrors were multiplied on both sides. The English forces, under Lord Ormond, succeeded in relieving Drogheda, were victorious at Kilmrush and Ross, and had the advantage throughout the Pale generally; while the arrival in Ulster of General Munroe, with 10,000 Scottish troops which had been enrolled by the Parliament, gave the English the ascendancy also in this province. Whereupon Phelim O'Neill, recognising his own incompetence as a general, relinquished the command of the rebel forces in Ulster in favour of his relative, Owen Roe O'Neill, who had formerly distinguished himself in the Spanish army. In the south and the west, however, the rebels held the field.

Meanwhile the Irish insurgents were endeavouring to provide themselves with an independent organization. After the English Parliament, by the enactment of December 8th, 1641, had proclaimed its intention to extirpate Catholicism in Ireland, twenty-nine dignitaries of the Catholic Church, including archbishops, bishops, and heads of religious orders, assembled in the celebrated cathedral of Kilkenny, May 10th, 1642, and declared the war in which they were engaged for the defence of their religion, for the maintenance of the royal prerogative (which they now considered to be menaced by the Puritans), and for the security of their lives and property, to be just and lawful; at the same time they expressed their abhorrence of all deeds of robbery and murder, and threatened the perpetrators of the same with the severest penalties of the Church. A provincial council, consisting of twenty-four members, was appointed to undertake the temporary direction of affairs in Ireland, the final decisions, however, to be referred to the general meeting of the confederates to be held in Kilkenny, October 23rd, the anniversary of the outbreak of the rebellion.²

Here, on the appointed day, eleven spiritual and fourteen temporal peers, in addition to 226 commoners, met together to deliberate as the Parliament of united Ireland. This assembly adopted measures for carrying on the struggle, for

¹ See Borlase, *loc. cit.*, p. 264.

² For the following events I would especially refer to an interesting article on "The Catholic Rule," in the *Edinburgh Review* of 1880 (vol. 151, pp. 437-483).

raising troops and levying taxes, and, especially, for the taxation of ecclesiastical property ; it also formulated an address to the king, in which the Irish emphatically protested their allegiance to the Crown, and sought to justify their independent action. The confederates likewise resolved to send envoys to France, Spain, and the papal court. These Catholic powers, in return, sent their agents to Kilkenny, and in 1643, Pope Urban VIII. issued a bull, which conveyed his special apostolic benediction to the Irish.

We have seen how, in the course of a year, the rebellion had entirely altered its character. Originally it was national antagonism, hatred of the English nation, its ancient oppressor, which completely dominated the movement ; but after the Puritan Parliament of England had decreed a war of extermination against the Catholics, the struggle assumed a wholly different aspect. The Catholics of English extraction united with those of Irish race, and thus combined, they assigned the foremost place in the conflict to the question of the defence of their faith against the threatening power of Puritanism, one effect of which was that the influence of the priesthood was considerably increased.

Let us, for a moment, inquire what was the position occupied by the king with regard to the Irish rebellion. When the revolution broke out, Charles happened to be in Scotland. Although in no way implicated in the rising, he at once recognised that here, in Ireland, there had arisen a formidable adversary to that Puritanism whose existence, both in England and Scotland, so embittered his life, and he, accordingly, resolved to utilise the movement for his own advantage. With this object in view, he allowed several months to elapse before he issued the proclamation by which the insurgents were denounced as traitors and rebels ; and when, at last, this proclamation had been extorted from him, he ordered that only forty copies of it should be printed, in order to circumscribe, as much as possible, the area of its circulation.¹ While, however, he was thus openly treating the Irish as rebels, he

¹ This order is to be met with in Guizot's "Collection des memoires relatifs à la révolution d'Angleterre" (1827) tom. vi. p. 378.

was secretly endeavouring to gain them as allies in his conflict with Puritanism, encouraged by the fact that they had repeatedly, and indeed very recently, at their general assembly at Kilkenny, assured him of their devotion, and at the same time, declared that they had taken up arms in defence of his royal prerogative, which they regarded as in imminent danger from the Puritans. He, therefore, instructed his faithful servant, Lord Ormond, leader of the English troops, to enter into negotiations with the Irish in respect to an armistice.

At first Lord Ormond's strong Protestant sentiments repelled against undertaking any direct transactions with the Irish Catholics, but his sense of loyalty finally overcame these scruples. The circumstance that Parsons, the bitterest foe to the Catholics which the Irish administration contained, had been removed from his post, tended to lessen the breach between the parties, and at length, September 16th, 1643, a truce was effected at Castlemartin, between the Council of Kilkenny and the king's deputies. The main stipulations of this truce were that both parties should maintain the positions they then occupied, and that the Catholics should have greater facilities of access to the king than heretofore, for which they, in return, voted him a subsidy of £20,000.¹

This armistice, which according to the original arrangement was intended to last a year, but was afterwards prolonged over another six months, was received in Ireland with very mingled feelings. The Catholics of the English colony greeted it with every manifestation of joy; the native Irish, on the other hand, who, at this time, were completely under the influence of the papal agent, Scarampi, an Oratorian priest, and were animated with the one desire to crush English rule in Ireland, looked upon the truce as a fatal barrier to their aims. But even among the Irish Protestants there existed a wide difference of opinion with respect to it. While the entire royalist party gladly accepted it, hoping that it would enable their monarch to procure fresh succours, the Puritans and the parliamentary party repudiated it, and General Munroe in Ulster, and the commander of the troops in Munster,

¹ See Warner, *loc. cit.*, p. 285.

both declared that they did not consider themselves bound by a truce which Parliament had characterised as unchristian.

The king, therefore, did not reap as much benefit from the suspension of hostilities as he had expected. It furnished him, however, with the opportunity of aiding the royal cause in England and Scotland, by enabling him to send to the assistance of the forces there a portion of the troops now no longer required in Ireland.

But in Scotland the new arrivals disappointed the expectations they had aroused, one of the Irish divisions being, without difficulty, in January, 1644, utterly routed by General Fairfax. In order to prevent any further despatch of Irish troops to Great Britain, the English Parliament, on October 24th, 1644, issued the blood-curdling decree that no quarter should be given to any Irish, or to any Papist born in Ireland, who might be found, in any part of Great Britain, in arms against the Parliament.¹ This order was carried out with frightful exactness, great numbers of Irish soldiers having been massacred in cold blood.

The king, however, did not feel satisfied with a mere suspension of arms, and he, accordingly, desired the Marquis of Ormond, who, since the 24th of January, 1644, had filled the office of lord-lieutenant, to spare no efforts to procure a lasting peace. But the Council of Kilkenny, at the instance of the papal legate, demanded, as one of the first conditions of such a peace, that the Catholic Church should be placed on an equality with the English Church, and such a concession being repugnant to Ormond's staunch and conscientious Protestantism, the king was compelled to employ another individual as his agent in these transactions; this was Herbert, Earl of Glamorgan, whom, as his plenipotentiary, he invested with large powers. He arrived in Dublin on August 1, 1645, and in conjunction with the Irish commissioners, was successful in settling the preliminaries of a treaty, the articles of which provided that the Irish should have secured to them

¹ See Plowden, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 147; an idea of the amount of cruelty which followed the promulgation of this decree may be gained from Lecky's "History of England," ii. p. 156 *et seq.*

the full and free exercise of their religion, and the undisturbed possession of all the churches which they owned at the beginning of the revolution, on condition that they furnished the king with an army of 10,000 men.¹ Apprehensive, however, that by placing the Catholic Church on an equal footing with the Anglican Church, he would forfeit the sympathies of his Protestant subjects, Charles did not, for the present, venture to make known in England the terms of this compact. But a copy of the treaty was accidentally discovered in the portmanteau of the Archbishop of Tuam, who lost his life during the Irish rebellion, upon which the Parliament immediately caused the document to be published. This disclosure aroused a violent storm of indignation against the monarch, who, on his part, did not even possess the courage or the manliness to acknowledge his participation in the transaction: on the contrary, he declared, upon his word as a Christian and a king, that he had never empowered Glamorgan to agree to this or any other similar treaty. But his repudiation of the agreement was in vain, and equally futile was the action of Ormond, who, under the pretext that Charles had never given his consent to such a contract, caused the Earl of Glamorgan, as negotiator, to be arrested on a charge of high treason. The English Protestants were firmly convinced of the king's share in the business, while the Irish Catholics felt themselves repelled and insulted by his cowardly refusal to admit it. This was but one of the many instances which occurred during the life of this sovereign, in which, by his intrigues and duplicity, he injured, instead of furthered, his own interests.

A few weeks after the secret agreement between Glamorgan and the Council of Kilkenny had been concluded, there

¹ Glamorgan's Treaty is to be found, among other places, in Guizot, *loc. cit.*, tom. vi. p. 484 *et seq.*; also in Plowden, ii. p. 111 *et seq.* With the object of exculpating King Charles, Hume has endeavoured, in his "History of England," vol. vii. pp. 416, 417, to show that the commissions produced by Glamorgan, which certainly were without seal, were not genuine. But the despatches of the papal ambassador, Rinuccini, which expressly refer to the existence of the royal commission granted to Glamorgan, must demolish all doubts as to their authenticity. For the discovery of the treaty, see Warner, *loc. cit.*, p. 354.

landed in Ireland the new papal nuncio, Monsignor Rinuccini, Archbishop of Fermo,¹ an individual who was destined to exercise an influence on the fortunes of the country, at once important and baleful. When, on the 15th September, 1644, Cardinal Panfili was elected to the papal chair, under the title of Innocent X., the Irish confederates despatched to Rome a special envoy to convey their congratulations. At the reception of this messenger, the new pope intimated that it was his intention that the accredited nuncio to Ireland should henceforth be a man of higher rank and possessing fuller powers than had hitherto been the case. Innocent X., having strong leanings towards Spain,² at first purposed to confide the mission to a subject of this kingdom ; but fearing that such a step would offend France, he relinquished his original design, and appointed the Archbishop of Fermo, who was a Tuscan, to be papal ambassador to Ireland.

Immediately on being informed of the pope's purpose to send this man as nuncio to Ireland, the king entrusted a written communication³ to his agent, Glamorgan, purporting to be letters of credence, which he was commissioned to deliver to the ambassador on his arrival. In this communication, the king expressed the hope that this, the first letter which, as sovereign of England, he had addressed to a minister of the pope, would not be the last ; and he trusted that at some future time he might be afforded the opportunity of openly manifesting his good-will. The reason for the extreme complaisance which Charles I. exhibited towards the Roman ambassador was that he hoped through the agency of the papal see to obtain a permanent peace with the Irish Catholics. But it was no mean price which the papacy demanded from

¹ The most valuable source of information for the activities of Rinuccini is supplied by his own despatches, originally published in Italian, "Nunziatura in Irlanda di Msgr. Batt. Rinuccini negli anni 1645-1649, pubblicata da Aiaffi, 1844," an English translation of which appeared in Dublin in 1873, under the title of "The Embassy in Ireland of Msgr. Rinuccini." These despatches form the basis of Ranke's account in his "Englische Geschichte," iv. pp. 23-27, as well as of the article, above referred to, in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1880.

² Comp. Ranke's "Englische Geschichte," iv. p. 24.

³ See Aiaffi's "Nunziatura in Irlanda," p. 82.

him in return for its support. We are acquainted with the secret instructions delivered to the nuncio,¹ and according to these, Charles was not only required to abolish the oath of supremacy, annul the penal laws against the Catholics, and grant to them free access to all offices and responsible positions, but a final and indispensable condition was, that the whole of the Irish fortresses should be surrendered to the Catholics, because,—and here we see how well known, even in Rome, were the fickleness and inconstancy of Charles I.,—without such a guarantee, no weight could be attached to the promises of his majesty.

The course of action to be pursued by Rinuccini was accurately laid down in the instructions which were delivered to him. In the first place, he was directed to go in quest of Queen Maria Henrietta, the wife of Charles I., who at that time was in France, and to convince her that the only means by which the sinking cause of the royalists could be served was an alliance with the Catholics ; he must further endeavour to influence Ormond ; but above all, the new ambassador was instructed to rely more upon the aboriginal Irish Catholics than upon the English Catholics, who, just at that juncture, were maintaining very intimate relations with France, and, consequently, did not stand high in the estimation of the Spaniard-loving pope. But he was advised to make the native Irish serviceable in the promotion of his own ends, and, before all things, to withdraw them from French influence.

In view of the acknowledged Spanish predilections of Innocent X., it was not remarkable that, in France, the nuncio was accorded but a cool reception. The English queen, at that time residing at the French Court, declined at first to receive him, while he declared that he had been completely duped by Mazarin. The more striking, therefore, on this account was the cordiality with which he was welcomed by the Irish Catholics, when, towards the end of October, 1645, he arrived in the Bay of Kenmare. At Kilkenny the president, Mountgarret, formally introduced him to the council

¹ See Aiaffi's "Nunziatura in Irlanda," p. 41.

in solemn session ; and here, in the course of an address,¹ he vigorously protested against the insinuations which were already in the air, that he desired to alienate the affections of the Irish subjects of his majesty ; on the contrary, he declared that, were the Irish Catholics but allowed the free exercise of their religion, they would offer to the king every demonstration of loyalty and respect.

It was just at the time when the nuncio was preparing to leave France and proceed on his journey to Ireland, that the treaty between Glamorgan and the Irish was brought to completion. Rinuccini, therefore, deemed it to be his first duty to make this newly restored peace still more conducive to the furtherance of Catholic interests. He especially desired to see accomplished the restoration of monastic property which had been impropriated at the time of the Reformation ; and there was also a widespread demand that the higher offices of the state, including the lord-lieutenancy, should be filled by Catholics only. But in consequence of the violent tempest of wrath evoked in England by the premature publication of Glamorgan's treaty, in which the concessions granted were of a far less sweeping character than those demanded by the nuncio, Rinuccini resolved, for the present, to hold his more comprehensive schemes in abeyance, and, indeed, to assume a greater degree of reserve in all his actions. This was rendered all the more necessary by the fact that, since the failure of the efforts made by the ultra-Catholic party under Glamorgan to effect a peace, Ormond's influence was again in the ascendant. He, too, although constant in his warnings against too great participation in making concessions to the Catholics, was unwearied in his endeavours, on behalf of his sovereign, to bring about a lasting peace between the Irish and the royalist party. And his efforts were not in vain, for on the 28th March, 1646, an agreement was concluded between the royalists and the Council of Kilkenny. The terms of this treaty provided that all questions of religion should remain in suspense until the decisive judgment of the

¹ See "Analecta Sacra," p. 200. For his reception in Ireland, comp. "The Catholic Rule," p. 458.

king could be procured. Verbally, however, the Catholics were promised the repeal of all penal statutes and the abolition of the oath of supremacy, for which they engaged to furnish 10,000 men for the king's service. It was originally intended that the compact should be kept secret, but, the king having meanwhile been compelled to flee for refuge to the Scots, in whose camp he found himself a prisoner, Ormond judged it best to publish the treaty, which he did on July 29th, 1646.¹

The Protestant royalists, as well as the Catholics of the Pale, were well satisfied with the peace; but not so the nuncio, or the native Irish element, which he held completely under his sway. This party was just now the less disposed to measures of moderation in consequence of the brilliant victory recently gained by their leader, Owen Roe O'Neill, over the Scotch troops under General Munroe, which took place at Benburb, 5th June, 1646. When, therefore, the announcement of peace was made at Kilkenny, it called forth many hostile manifestations, and in Limerick the feeling of dissatisfaction was so strong that it occasioned an insurrection, while at Waterford a synod was held, August 12th, 1646, under the presidency of Rinuccini, which declared all those who accepted Ormond's peace to be guilty of perjury and to have incurred the penalty of excommunication.²

In his diplomatic despatches, Rinuccini laid particular stress on the statement that the influence and importance of the clergy had been largely augmented in consequence of the repudiation of the peace by the assembly at Waterford. The nuncio, now, in fact, assumed the leadership of the native Irish faction, and induced the two insurgent generals, O'Neill and Preston, to make an attack on Dublin. This assault, however, proving unsuccessful, owing to the prompt and vigorous action of Ormond, as well as to the want of unanimity between the two military commanders, Preston, who as an Englishman enjoyed but little of Rinuccini's favour, was accused of treachery, and the nuncio was strongly disposed

¹ See Warner, *loc. cit.*, p. 368.

² For an account of the Synod of Waterford, consult Brennan's "Ecclesiastical History of Ireland" (1854), p. 459.

to order his arrest. Equally absolute was the influence he exercised over the assembly which was held at Kilkenny early in the year 1647. The members of the council who had taken any share in the negotiations with Ormond, with reference to the treaty of peace, he caused to be imprisoned. A new council was elected, consisting of four priests and eight laymen, all partisans of Rinuccini, over which he himself presided. He appointed Glamorgan to be general in Munster, and entertained the design of creating him lord-lieutenant, but only on condition that he took an oath of loyalty and obedience to the papal see and its nuncio, thereby completely ignoring Glamorgan's obligations to his sovereign.¹

Indeed, it gradually became evident that the nuncio had grown altogether indifferent to the royalist cause. He declined any longer to countenance the oath of allegiance to the king, which it had been stipulated should be taken by the Catholic clergy, and regretted that he had previously used language which could be construed as being favourable to such a course. Among the clergy, a theory began to be formulated—and assuredly not without the assistance of the nuncio,—that by its apostacy from the Catholic faith the English Crown had forfeited all its claims upon Ireland, and that, therefore, the island reverted to its original feudal lord, the pope. In accordance with this theory, Rinuccini was anxious to transfer it, without delay, to the possession of the Roman see; but, as it was possible that Rome might entertain scruples regarding the policy of a direct intervention in the matter, the nuncio conceived a project, according to which a brother of the Grand Duke of Tuscany should go over to Ireland, and there establish his rule under the supreme sovereignty of the pope.²

¹ For the proceedings of this assembly, see especially Moran's "Spicilegium Ossoriense" (Dublin, 1878, 2nd series), p. 28; compare Ranke's "Englische Geschichte," iv. p. 25; also "The Catholic Rule," p. 463.

² In a recent criticism of this work by Dr. Bellesheim (*Litterarischer Handweiser*, 1886, No. 407, p. 272), these attempts have been disputed. Dr. Bellesheim supports his case by an appeal to the "Discursus Apologeticus Rinuccinii" (Moran, "Spicilegium Ossoriense," Dublin, 1884, iii. p. 55), where the nuncio observes, "Cum nemo usquam a meo in Hiberniam adventu debitæ Maiestati suæ fidelitatis iuriumque eius

Who can tell whether or not these deeply-laid schemes might have been carried out to a successful issue, had not Ormond stepped in, and by his action determined the course of events. He saw through the policy of the nuncio, and clearly recognised that the success of his schemes meant, for Ireland, the utter subversion of British dominion and the extirpation of the Protestant religion. When he perceived, therefore, that he was menaced anew by O'Neill's troops, and that Dublin would be unable to hold out against the attack, it revolted his feelings to allow the Irish capital to fall into the hands of the Celts, who were so completely under the domination and influence of the nuncio. In spite of his antipathy to Puritan republicanism, as an Englishman and a Protestant, he preferred to surrender the city to the parliamentary forces. He, therefore, treated with the envoy of the parliamentary army, and on the 28th July, 1647, he resigned the Irish metropolis to Colonel Jones, and immediately hastened to London to vindicate his conduct in the course which he had taken.

This event had a profound significance. Not only did the surrender of a place so important as Dublin furnish the parliamentary troops with a base for further operations, but this occurrence brought about a material change in the position of the nuncio himself. The more moderate Catholics, and especially those who were of English extraction, attributed the capitulation of Dublin to the singular and anti-national policy of the nuncio, in consequence of which, the feeling of antagonism against Rinuccini increased from day to day, more

regalium (*salvo tamen quocunque religionis interesse*) iuxta divinum illud quæ sunt Cæsarum Cæsari, quæ sunt Dei, Deo, maiorem me ipso conservatorem ac propugnatorem . . . se demonstravit." But in a letter of the 2nd March, 1647, to Cardinal Panfilio, he expressly writes that he regretted "di non astenermi da quelle frasi—dicendo per esempio che besognava sollevare, acutare il Re, mostrarsi buoni suddite . . . veggo malto bene, che doveva lasciar di sollo scrivere" (see Aiazz, "Nunziatura," p. 205). In my judgment, decidedly more weight may be attached to a familiar letter of this nature than to a document which was prepared expressly for publication. Comp. also Aiazz, p. 266, where reference is made to the transference of Ireland to a Catholic prince; and Ranke's "*Englische Geschichte*," iv. pp. 25, 26.

¹ See Warner, *loc cit.*, p. 408.

particularly when, shortly afterward, August 6th, 1647, the Irish troops were defeated at Trim by the parliamentary army under Colonel Jones. This change of mood among the Irish first began to manifest itself in the general assembly at Kilkenny, which held its session in the middle of November. Here the moderate element preponderated so largely that Rinuccini, as may be imagined, was not greatly pleased with its proceedings, but on the contrary, violently complained of its intrigues and dissensions. And that he had good reason for his dissatisfaction is shown by the fact that the assembly reconstructed the council, which had only shortly before been elected, choosing the new members mostly from among the Catholics of the Pale, while the friends of the nuncio were left in a minority. This new council resumed its relations with the royalists which had been so unceremoniously interrupted, and succeeded in effecting a truce with Lord Inchiquin, the commander of the troops in Munster, who had formerly been a parliamentarian, but was now an adherent of the royalist cause ; and it also invited Ormond to return to Ireland.¹

Rinuccini naturally offered vigorous, though at the same time, unavailing opposition to these acts, for the general assembly of the confederates which met in 1648, was, in like manner, mainly composed of the peace party. This assembly, consequently, approved of the armistice concluded with Lord Inchiquin, and presented a vote of thanks to the council for its exertions in connection with these negotiations. Rinuccini, on the other hand, issued a proclamation in which he excommunicated all those who accepted the truce, while all those towns and districts which declared in favour of the assembly he placed under interdict.² But even this threatening measure failed to produce the desired result, and the nuncio found that he could no longer rely even upon the clergy.³ Peter Walsh, the Franciscan monk, fulminated against the interdict in his sermons ;

¹ See "The Catholic Rule," p. 465 ; Warner, *loc. cit.*, p. 415 ; also Ranke, iv. p. 26.

² See "Nunziatura in Irlanda," p. 434 *et seq.*

³ For the disaffection among the Catholic clergy, comp. Gilbert in "A Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland," p. 274 ; and for Rinuccini's relations to the Jesuits, see "Nunziatura," p. 337 *et seq.*

the Archbishop of Tuam and the Bishop of Ossory openly defied the nuncio ; the Jesuit provincial refused him obedience, while prominent peers appealed to the pope and entered their protest against the excommunication pronounced by his legate. Rinuccini thus began to feel the ground giving way beneath his feet, and Ormond having on the last day of September, 1648, landed in Cork, and been met by the chiefs of Connaught and Munster with offers of support, he eventually decided that it would be the wisest course for him to take his departure from Ireland. Accordingly, in March, 1649, he set sail for France, on the way to the scene of his former archiepiscopal labours. On arriving at Orleans, he addressed a communication to the head of the Jesuit order, in which he sorely complained of the Irish provincial, and accused him of having materially contributed towards bringing about the surrender of Ireland into the hands of the Protestant Church.¹

Thus ended that remarkable episode in Irish history, during which it seemed as if Ireland were about to sever her connection with England, and become united to a Catholic and continental power. That a complete rupture was avoided must chiefly be attributed to the energetic action of Ormond, whose royalist principles and diplomatic skill were put to a severe test after his return to Ireland in the year 1648. Intensely anxious, as he was, to render assistance to the hardly pressed sovereign of Ireland, he knew that this was only possible on the attainment of perfect unanimity between the Protestant royalists and the Irish Catholics. But, to this end, it was necessary that concessions should be made by both parties. On the one hand, the Catholics would have to withdraw their demand for the establishment of their religion, which was the object aimed at by the nuncio ; and on the other hand, the Protestants would be obliged to extend religious toleration to the Catholics. To this latter course Ormond's views strongly disposed him, and he was willing to promise them the repeal of the penal statutes and the abolition of the oath of supremacy. With regard to ecclesiastical property, he assured them that they should not be

¹ The letter is printed in the *Edinburgh Review* (1880), p. 469.

disturbed, and that no further action should be taken until the decisions of his majesty could be ascertained. The Catholics, at first, considered the concessions to be insufficient, but subsequently, "induced by the present condition of his majesty," they determined to accept Ormond's proposals. On the 16th January, 1649, the general assembly of the Irish confederates announced their acceptance of these terms, and on the following day the treaty of peace was solemnly published by the lord-lieutenant.¹

But the king himself was not destined to reap any advantage from the support which accrued to the royalist cause by this treaty. In January of 1649, he ended his life on the block. In Ireland, his youthful son was proclaimed with great enthusiasm as Charles II., and it seemed as if, in consequence of the atrocious deed committed by the Commonwealth, the sentiment of loyalty among the Irish people had received a new impulse. With the exception of Dublin, which was in the hands of the parliamentary troops under Colonel Jones, and a considerable part of Ulster, Ormond had succeeded in bringing the entire island under control. As regarded Dublin he hoped that this, too, would soon become his; and as he was of opinion that the possession of this stronghold "would advance the royalist cause in all the three kingdoms," he summoned the commander of the town to surrender, a demand with which Colonel Jones very emphatically refused to comply thus leaving the question to be settled by force of arms.²

Ormond was more successful in his negotiations with Owen Roe O'Neill, who still held the greater portion of Ulster. At the outset, it is true, matters appeared to be but little more promising in this quarter, for the leader of the old Irish party, who was engaged in continual hostilities with Monk, the general of the parliamentary troops, was so fanatical in his opposition to the Protestant royalist, Ormond, that he preferred to make terms with the Commonwealth. He therefore despatched a messenger to London to lay his proposals before a committee of the Council of State. On condition of receiving

¹ See Warner, *loc cit.*, pp. 440-448.

² Comp. Ranke's "Englische Geschichte," bd. iv. p. 28.

a free pardon, undisturbed possession of their estates, and freedom for the exercise of their religion, the Ulster chief and his followers offered to go over to the republic.¹ The Council of State, however, declined to accede to these conditions, and the result was, that seeing himself thwarted in this direction, and his advances repelled, O'Neill, notwithstanding his personal antipathy, made overtures to Ormond, and finally determined to accept the terms of his offered peace. From this time, Ormond's sway was established over almost the entire country, and when Prince Rupert, with his flotilla, cast anchor before Kinsale, the royal flag was floating in the breeze.

The English Parliament, however, lost no time in adopting counter measures. Convinced that only danger could accrue to the parliamentary cause from a coalition which had sprung into existence on Irish soil, the Parliament determined to make this the first object of its attack. How great was the importance it attached to this campaign may be inferred from its choice of the commander-in-chief. The supreme command of all the forces was intrusted to Oliver Cromwell, the most able and distinguished military leader of the revolutionary period. He was, at the same time, created Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, while vast sums of money, which had been obtained by the sale of ecclesiastical property and Crown domains, were placed at his disposal.²

¹ M. Brosch ("Oliver Cromwell und die puritanische Revolution," p. 338) speaks only of a report that O'Neill was disposed to negotiate with Cromwell, his authority for which is a despatch of Morisini, the Venetian envoy; but the memoirs of General Ludlow, which are contained in Guizot's "Memoires relatifs à la révolution d'Angleterre (1827, vi.-viii.), tom. vii. p. 10 *et seq.*, directly state that those negotiations actually took place; and on this subject Ludlow is a reliable witness, inasmuch as, according to his own account, he was a member of the committee which was deputed to conduct transactions with the Irish agents.

² The most important source of information respecting Cromwell's sojourn in Ireland is furnished by his own letters, "Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations," by Thomas Carlyle (Lond., 1871), vol. ii.; in addition to these may be named the biography contained in Forster's "Historical and Biographical Essays" (vol. i., 1858); "The Civil Wars and Oliver Cromwell," by Pauly; "The New Plutarch" (1874), vol. i. pp. 81-208; and Brosch in "Oliver Cromwell und die puritanische Revolution" (1886). Concerning the methods which were employed to procure the necessary pecuniary supplies for prosecuting the war in Ireland, see Ludlow's "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 17.

The coalition which it was intended to demolish bore an essentially royalist character, and as the majority of the troops consisted of Catholics, an attempt was made to use religious fanaticism and the English hatred of popery as an additional weapon against the enemy. Cromwell entered upon the contest as the hero and champion of religion, and on the 10th July, 1649, immediately before his departure from England, in order to stamp the campaign with the character of a crusade, he caused the collective banners of the army to be consecrated by the clergy. In the very moment when he was about to embark at Milford Haven, he received the favourable intelligence that, on the 2nd August, 1649, while advancing against Dublin, Ormond had been totally defeated at Rathmines by the parliamentary troops under Colonel Jones.¹

On August 15 the new lord-lieutenant entered Dublin, and after a brief stay in the capital, he directed his movements towards Drogheda, a strongly fortified town, in which, under the command of General Ashton, a soldier of large experience, Ormond had shut up 3,000 of his choicest troops—a grave strategetic blunder, in this wild and uncivilized land, thus to risk his all upon one venture. After offering a determined resistance, the town was captured on September 11, and the eye turns with a shudder from the bloody scenes which were enacted on that occasion. When the last and most important of the fortifications had fallen into the hands of the enemy, Cromwell issued the inhuman command to slaughter the entire garrison, consisting of 2,000 men, and he himself declared that not thirty men escaped with their lives. The tower of St. Peter's Church, which was being defended by a numerous body of fugitives, he caused to be set on fire; while of those troops which garrisoned the remaining towers and steeples of the town, and voluntarily surrendered, the officers were put to the sword, every tenth man was shot, and the rest were banished to the Barbadoes. Possibly Cromwell felt the necessity for offering some justifi-

¹ See Carte's "Ormond Papers," ii. pp. 407-411; also Cromwell's letter of the 13th August, 1649, in Carlyle's "Cromwell's Letters," vol. ii. p. 134.

cation for these deeds of horror when he wrote to Lenthal, speaker of the House of Commons, in these terms: "I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future. Which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret."¹ A month after this a similar massacre took place at Wexford. When this town capitulated, although Cromwell had distinctly promised the inhabitants that their lives should be spared, 2,000 human beings were slain by the British soldiers. In this wholesale carnage he again perceives but "the just judgment of God," and "wishes now that an honest people would come and plant there."²

Nor were these terrible scenes without their effect. Several towns of importance, as Cork, Ross on the Barrow, and Youghal, declared for the conqueror. But another result of Cromwell's successes, and one of immeasurably more moment, was the disruption of the coalition of royalists, Catholics, and the native Irish, which, at the cost of so much labour and trouble, had been effected by Ormond. The Protestant contingent, who were of English descent, had, indeed, never cherished any sentiments of good fellowship towards their brothers in arms among the Irish Catholics, and the brilliant military achievements of Cromwell, in addition to their own inherent aversion to popery which their English leaders contrived to turn to good account, materially contributed towards completely estranging them from their Catholic comrades; the consequence being that the soldiers of English extraction went over to Cromwell's side in large masses. On the other hand, owing to the distracted and unsettled state of their fellow-combatants, the Irish lost heart and confidence: they began to think that, in alliance with Calvinists and under Calvinistic leaders, the victory would never more be theirs. They, therefore, severed the connection between themselves and their former confederates, and again caused

¹ Comp. Carlyle's "Cromwell's Letters," vol. ii. p. 152.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 170.

the religious question to occupy the most prominent place in the contest.

The manifesto which was issued from the Abbey of Clonmacnoise by twenty Catholic bishops on December 4th, 1649, and addressed to all Catholics, played an important and influential part in changing the character of the struggle, which, from being a conflict between royalism and republicanism, now became a kind of religious war. This manifesto had its origin in a request made by the commander of Ross for religious liberty, to which Cromwell made answer, that, "if under religious liberty, freedom to celebrate the mass were understood, then such a thing could never be permitted where the Parliament of England held sway!"¹ The manifesto,² therefore, called upon all faithful Catholics to unite themselves in a league against England, it being now notorious that the Parliament had ordered the extermination of their religion, and doomed its followers, partly to slaughter, and partly to transportation to the Tobacco Islands.

Cromwell considered it to be his duty to take notice of this action on the part of the bishops, and accordingly, in January, 1650, while he was in winter-quarters at Youghal, he issued "A Declaration for the undeceiving of deluded and seduced people, which may be satisfactory to all that do not wilfully shut their eyes against the light." In this declaration he endeavours to defend himself with regard to the accusations that had been made against him, and especially to show that no quiet, peaceable citizens had been slain, but only such as had been seized with weapons in their hands ; and that only those persons had been transported to Barbadoes who, as rebels against England, might justly have been put to death. An explanation which could scarcely have appeared conclusive to an Irishman. He then seizes the opportunity to take the prelates and the clergy severely to task. Every prerogative claimed by the clergy appears to him to be arrogance and presumption on their part. In a fulmination against the bishops on the question of this assumed superiority, he exclaims, "And it is for filthy lucre's sake that you keep it up,

¹ Carlyle's "Cromwell's Letters," vol. ii. p. 175.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 204 *et seq.*

that by making the people believe they are not so holy as yourselves, they might for their penny purchase some sanctity from you, and that you might bridle, saddle, and ride them at your pleasure"; "but arbitrary power," he thunders in another place, "is a thing men begin to be weary of, in kings and churchmen; their juggle between them mutually to uphold civil and ecclesiastical tyranny begins to be transparent." Then he grows enthusiastic for religious freedom, and gives utterance to the following sentence, "For my part, I have already declared that concerning liberty of conscience, I meddle not with any man's conscience."¹ Remarkable words, especially when taken in connection with his hostility to the mass, as evidenced in his reply to the commander of Ross; or when they are compared with his declaration contained in this very proclamation, that wherever he has authority the celebration of the mass shall never be tolerated! But it was just a revelation of the contradiction and inconsistency with which both Cromwell and the entire body of Independency were, at that time, penetrated. In theory, enthusiasts for every form of religious liberty, and willing also to accord it to every sect of Protestantism, immediately a Catholic claimed the same freedom for himself, liberty of conscience was a thing unknown to them.

Shortly after the publication of this declaration, Cromwell left his winter quarters, and on January 29th, 1650, advanced on the fortress of Kilkenny, which, towards the end of March, capitulated. Clonmel, which was gallantly defended by Hugh O'Neill and 2,000 of his clansmen, offered far more determined resistance. Repeated assaults were repulsed, in which Cromwell lost near upon 1,000 of his ablest troops; and finally, having exhausted his ammunition, O'Neill was permitted to withdraw, leaving his assailants to take possession of the deserted town. The brave chief, and the greater portion of his followers, subsequently forsook their island home, and took service in the army of Spain.²

¹ Carlyle's "Cromwell's Letters," vol. ii. pp. 207-225.

² For the siege of Clonmel, the letter of an eyewitness, to be found in Carlyle, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. pp. 256, 257, is valuable; also Ludlow, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 28, although, as Warner has shown, the latter contains certain inaccuracies.

Cromwell was making arrangements to besiege Waterford when letters from the Parliament recalled him to England, and appointed him to take the conduct of the war with Scotland. He, therefore, entrusted the command of the forces in Ireland to his son-in-law, Ireton, and towards the end of May, 1650, set sail for England.

Very positive results, it must be admitted, had accrued from this campaign. As Carlyle says, "Cromwell broke the brain of the Irish War," and a final triumph of the rebels was a contingency now impossible to contemplate. There was, however, still work to be accomplished. Beside numberless small fastnesses, which still repelled the attacks of the republican troops, Limerick, Waterford, and Galway, the most strongly fortified positions in the land, were yet in the hands of the Irish; while new hosts in defence of Ireland's cause were being collected in Connaught under Lord Clanricarde, and in Ulster under MacMahon, the warlike Bishop of Clogher, who, after the death of Owen Roe O'Neill—caused, it was suspected, by poison—had undertaken the command of the troops in the north.

Ireton, however, continued the war precisely on the lines laid down by his predecessor. The important strongholds of Waterford and Carlow were captured, and in Ulster the Bishop of Clogher was defeated and taken prisoner by the British forces, and shortly afterward brought to the block.

Meanwhile, Lord Ormond, who during so many years had played a leading part in the conduct of Irish affairs, also left Ireland. After the dissolution of the royalist coalition, his position in the country became untenable. The Protestant contingent of his army, intoxicated by the victories of Cromwell, forsook his banner; while to his Catholic troops, owing to his being a strong High Churchman by conviction, he was an object of positive hatred; and, finally, some of the Irish towns refused to admit his garrisons, declaring that they preferred to govern themselves as free communities.

Another agreement, it is true, was arrived at between him and the Irish nationalists, but it was of such a nature that it completely delivered him over to the power of this party.

The towns stipulated, indeed, to receive his troops, but only the Catholic portion of them, the Protestants among them, both officers and men, having to be discharged,—the consequence of which was that, on receiving their dismissal, they went over to the enemy in a body. Ormond was even compelled to grant seats and votes in the council to certain bishops who were engaged in continual intrigues against him, and desired his removal from the country. Notwithstanding the difficulties of his position, he faithfully remained at his post until the end of the year 1650, when he received the intelligence that Charles II. had acceded to the demands of the Scotch Puritans. This news, doubly calamitous to the staunch episcopalian Ormond, induced him to put into execution a plan which he had long meditated. On the 9th December, 1650, after resigning the functions of his office to Lord Clanricarde, a Catholic of weight and influence, as well as of moderate views, despairing of himself and of his country, he said farewell to that unhappy land.

Shortly after his departure, it appeared as if the wild and quixotic policy which had sought to transfer Ireland to the power of a Catholic and continental monarch—although in the hands of Rinuccini it had resulted in such utter failure—were about to be revived. The Bishop of Ferns, a political adventurer, having induced the Duke of Lorraine to advance money to supply the sinews of war, proposed, in return for this service, to confer on him and his heirs the protectorate of Ireland. This proposal, however, was promptly rejected by Clanricarde, as being insulting and disloyal to the king.¹

In the meantime, the condition of the Irish, particularly after the important stronghold of Limerick had, in 1651, fallen into the hands of the enemy, was becoming increasingly hopeless.

¹ The fortunes of Ormond until his departure from the island are related very minutely by Carte in his “Life of Ormond,” and also by Warner. Information relating to the intrigues of the Bishop of Ferns, and the action of the Duke of Lorraine, is chiefly to be obtained from the Memoirs of Clanricarde (see “Ulik Bourke, Marquis of Clanricarde, Lord Deputy of Ireland : Memoirs, Letters, and Papers relating to the Treaty between the Duke of Lorraine and the Irish Commissioners, 1650–1653.” 1722). Comp. also Warner, pp. 525–528.

The English Government appointed civil commissioners,¹ whose duty it was to levy a tax on the subdued districts for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the war, as well as to administer justice and restore order in the reconquered provinces. And indeed a better state of things was sorely needed, for the condition of this unfortunate country was truly deplorable. As a means of reducing the Irish to submission, the English troops had killed all their cattle, while the soldiers, furnished with sickles and scythes, had mown down the yet green corn;² and the consequences of this barbarous method of warfare were now visible in the frightful famine which prevailed throughout the land. To prevent the complete destruction of live stock in the country, the civil commissioners saw themselves compelled to issue a proclamation forbidding the slaughter of lambs or calves, except by special permission. The cultivation of the soil had almost entirely ceased, and to procure bread sufficient for their own requirements, the soldiers were obliged to till the ground and sow the seed.³ But among the native Irish population the famine was so terrible that, as eyewitnesses relate, in order to sustain life, many of them were reduced to the fearful necessity of eating human corpses. On the heels of this calamity followed the pestilence, which claimed its victims in every part of the country, among the number being Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law, and commander-in-chief of the parliamentary army.

After Ireton's death the command of the forces was assumed by Ludlow, who, in May, 1652, captured Galway, the most important position in Connaught. He then advanced against Ross, whose commander, Lord Muskerry, was already prepared to surrender on being allowed the free exercise of religion. To this demand Ludlow replied that the power he served was not wont to force its religion on any person whatever, upon which Lord Muskerry laid down his arms,⁴ although surely no one acquainted with the views of Cromwell could possibly attach any significance to a declaration of this character.

¹ See Ludlow, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 69 *et seq.*

² See Prendergast's "Cromwellian Settlement" (1865), p. 14.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴ Comp. Ludlow, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 156.

This was the last act in the struggle as an organised contest. On the 27th September, 1652, the English Parliament declared the war to be at an end. Ireland now lost its separate and distinct existence as a nation, and became an integral part of the United Kingdom; and, during the existence of the Commonwealth, sent its representatives to the Parliament at Westminster as often as the mighty Protector thought fit to convoke such an assembly.

This terrible struggle, which during its progress had presented as many varied aspects as the kaleidoscope, had lasted eleven years. Primarily, a spontaneous national rising against the English in consequence of the stringent measures adopted by the Puritan Parliament against the Catholics, it soon assumed the character of a war in defence of religion. The appearance of the nuncio, who designed the complete severance of Ireland from England, and its annexation to a Catholic continental state, marked a fresh epoch in the contest. This strange and eccentric policy, however, had the effect of causing the moderate Catholics to join Ormond's army, thus forming a coalition which represented an alliance of all the royalist elements in opposition to the forces of the Commonwealth Cromwell's military successes, in conjunction with the fact that he was pleased to adopt the *rôle* of the champion of Protestantism, constituted the wedge which split up this coalition, and occasioned the Protestant contingent to forsake their allies, and enter the parliamentary ranks; from which time to its close the war bore the character of a national and religious contest between the English Protestants and the Irish Catholics.

But long after the actual war was at an end, bands of the unvanquished Irish maintained themselves in the swamps and forests of the west. The treatment to which these remnants of the enemy were subjected by the soldiery sent out against them was characterised by relentless severity; and Ludlow himself relates in his memoirs, that he once fired the mouth of a cave in which one of these companies of freebooters was hidden, and that, with a few exceptions, the entire band was suffocated.¹ But in spite of these cruel measures, they held

¹ Ludlow, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 163.

out a considerable time. Outlaws from all human society, these "Tories," as they were called in Ireland, led a robbers' life, similar to that of the brigands of Italy,—at one time hunted like wild beasts, at another the terror and dread of the resident landowners.

It is, however, a difficult task adequately to describe the terrible condition of this unhappy land at the close of the war.¹ Towns, villages, country seats, all lay in ruins, and it was even possible to hunt wolves in the outskirts of the capital.² The tillage of the fields was utterly neglected, and the price of rye had risen from twelve shillings to fifty shillings a bushel.³ The entire island, which was once one of the richest grazing countries in Europe, was so impoverished in stock that cattle had to be imported from Wales,⁴ and so great was the dearth of capital, that though the customary rate of interest was six per cent., no money could be obtained in Ireland under twelve per cent.⁵ In 1654 the entire revenue of the country only amounted to about £200,000, while the maintenance of the army alone cost £500,000.⁶

During the eleven years of the war, out of a population of 1,466,000 souls, 616,000 perished either by sword, pestilence, or famine; while of those who survived, but few remained in Ireland. At the time of the various capitulations, the troops were allowed the option of leaving their native land and taking service in some other country not engaged in hostilities with the Commonwealth. Thousands of the younger and more vigorous men took advantage of this offer, and in May, 1652, 7,000, and in September of the same year, 3,000

¹ For description of the condition of the country at the close of the war, and for an account of the succeeding colonization, consult Prendergast's "Cromwellian Settlement" (Lond., 1865), the material for which has been derived, in a great measure, from numerous contemporary pamphlets, but more particularly from the unpublished "Order Books of the Commissioners of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England."

² See Prendergast, *loc. cit.*, p. 144.

³ Comp. Lecky's "History of England," vol. ii. p. 172.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ See Sir Josiah Child's "Discourse on Trade" (French trans.), p. 75 *et seq.*; comp. also Petty's "Political Anatomy of Ireland," p. 74; and Roscher in "Die Grundlagen der Nationalökonomie" (Stuttg., 1871), p. 398.

⁶ See Prendergast, *loc. cit.*, p. 16.

men were shipped to Spain. Lord Muskerry despatched 5,000 to the King of Poland, and 3,500 took service under the Prince of Condé: altogether, it is estimated, no less than 34,000 Irishmen took military service in foreign lands.¹

Transportation to the West Indies also tended greatly to depopulate the country. We have already mentioned (p. 80) that after the capture of Drogheda and Wexford, numbers of soldiers were shipped to Barbadoes. But the close of the war did not put an end to these transports. English agents, mostly Bristol merchants, entered into negotiations with the Government for the surrender of Irish men, women, and girls for transport to the sugar plantations. The Government agreed to the proposals of these men, and assigned to them, in the first place, the prisoners of war, as well as all the Irish found in the workhouses and jails; but, in addition to these, it ordered that all persons who had no visible means of support might also be transported thither. Accordingly, the English agents, like so many slave-drivers, carried away numberless widows, young girls, and boys, who were perfectly innocent of every crime, to those infamous islands, there to fall victims to the murderous climate or to the evil passions of the planters.²

It was natural, therefore, that the English should make an attempt to re-colonize the land thus desolated by pestilence and war, voluntary emigration and penal transportation; the more so, that such a colonization would tend to increase the influence and importance of the English element in the country. The greater the number of English settlers, the less dangerous could the Irish be; but before it would be possible to plant a large number of English colonists, a still larger number of the Irish must first be deprived of their land. Regarded from this point of view, the Act³ which was passed on the 12th August, 1652, some time before the war was actually at an end, and which was published with a flourish of trumpets throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, gains

¹ See Prendergast, *loc. cit.*, p. 21 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, pp. 237-240.

³ This Act is to be found in "Acts and Ordinances during the Ursurpation from 1640 to 1656," by Henry Scobell; comp. also Prendergast, p. 27.

some significance and becomes capable of explanation. By this Act all ecclesiastical and Crown property was confiscated ; all those persons who had taken any share in the rebellion before the 10th November, 1642, in addition to about a hundred others, whose names were announced, were sentenced to death and to the loss of their property ; all those landowners who had ever borne arms against the Parliament, were condemned to the loss of their own property, but were entitled to receive landed property in Connaught to one-third of the value of their own forfeited possessions ; those persons who had not taken up arms against the Parliament, yet had never manifested any good-will towards it, were condemned to lose one-third of their goods, and in place of the two-thirds which remained to them, were to receive lands in Connaught of a corresponding value ; the lower classes, persons who at the utmost could show property to the amount of £10, received free pardon on condition of migrating to the province of Connaught. Only such labourers as were necessary to the English for the cultivation of the soil were allowed to remain in the other provinces.

We clearly see from this last provision that the ground for this act of confiscation was not the part which the Irish had taken in the rebellion, but the rapacity of the English, and their desire for Irish lands ; for, whereas the lower classes, who in time of war are usually the persons who allow themselves the greatest license, received free pardon, the better situated classes, who would assuredly be the last to be guilty of any excess, by the elastic constitution of this Act forfeited almost the whole of their property.

The precise method to be pursued in this new colonization was, however, to be decided by a further Act of Parliament, which was passed on the 27th September, 1653.¹ This Act decreed that before the 1st May, 1654, at the latest, all the Irish population of Ulster, Leinster, and Munster, should leave these provinces and cross the Shannon into Connaught. Whoever, after that date, should be found on this side of the

¹ See Scobell's "Acts and Ordinances," chap. xii. ; and Prendergast, p. 23.

stream should be liable to the penalty of death. The only persons exempted from the operation of this Act were such Irish women as had married English Protestants, and who desired to embrace the faith of their husbands ; boys under fourteen, and girls under twelve years of age, who might be in the service of Protestants ; those labourers who were necessary for the management of estates held by Englishmen ; and finally, those persons who during the eleven years of war had given some manifest token of their good-will towards the Parliament.

Let us see how the property thus acquired was disposed of. All ecclesiastical property, in addition to the counties of Kildare, Dublin, Carlow, and Cork, the Government reserved for its own use, to be applied to the payment of public debts, and to rewarding prominent adherents of the parliamentary cause. The counties of Limerick and Tipperary, in Munster ; Meath, West Meath, King's County, and Queen's County, in Leinster ; Antrim and Down, in Ulster, were devoted to satisfying the claims of adventurers who had advanced money to the Parliament to the amount of £360,000 ; while to Cromwell's soldiers were assigned the remaining counties in Ulster, Leinster, and Munster, with the exception of County Clare, which with the province of Connaught fell to the share of the Irish.

The reason that just this province was allotted to the Irish was that, consisting as it did for the most part of moor and rock, it was not regarded as desirable territory by the English. Moreover, it was encircled by the Shannon and the sea ; consequently, the entire Irish nation could literally be held in captivity in this province ; and, as if to render the imprisonment still more real, a belt of land four miles in width, extending along the banks of the Shannon and the sea-coast, was taken from the Irish and peopled with soldiers.¹ According to the original decree, the migration of the Irish into this province, thus surrounded by a military cordon, was to have taken place by the 1st May, 1654 ; but the Government agreed to grant a respite until the 1st May, 1655, at which date the three

¹ See Prendergast, p. 187.

provinces of Ulster, Leinster, and Munster must be cleared of every Irish landowner. After the expiration of this term, forays were made into these provinces by English officials, and any Irish who, contrary to law, were discovered on this side of the Shannon, were either put to death or transported to the Barbadoes.¹ On the other hand, a dreary life awaited those who had settled in Connaught. In this sterile, war-wasted province they were doomed to life-long poverty, exposed to the suspicious and contemptuous surveillance of the English, and in consequence of the proscription of their faith, they were not even permitted to satisfy the needs of their religious nature. For, an edict of the 6th January, 1653, revived an obsolete and forgotten law of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which enacted that any Irish priest found in Ireland after the space of twenty days should be liable to be hanged, beheaded, and quartered.² It also decreed that those persons who, after this date, harboured a priest should be subject to the penalty of death and the confiscation of their goods. Accordingly, a price was set on the head of every priest, and those who extended succour or shelter to any member of this class, did it at the risk of their lives and property.

The districts vacated by the Irish were soon in the occupation of English officers and soldiers, merchants and artisans; and it cannot be denied that, in the hands of its new owners, the land gradually began to recover from the desolation caused by the war.³ Even a writer so hostile to the Commonwealth as Clarendon, says: "And which is more wonderful, all this was done and settled within little more than two years, to that degree of perfection, that there were many buildings raised for beauty as well as use, orderly and regular plantations of trees, and fences and enclosures raised throughout the kingdom, purchases made by one from the other at very valuable rates, and jointures made upon marriage, and all other conveyances and settlements executed as in a kingdom

¹ For the dispensations and respites granted, see Prendergast, p. 34; and for the penalties decreed, *ibid.*, pp. 53, 64, 142.

² See Brennan's "Ecclesiastical History of Ireland," and Prendergast, p. 157.

³ See Clarendon's "Autobiography" (1761), vol. ii. p. 118.

at peace within itself, and where no doubt could be made of the validity of titles." These results were mainly attributable to the remarkable energy and the not inconsiderable capital which the various classes of colonists had imported into the country ; but, notwithstanding the impetus thus given to the economic prosperity of the country, the social condition of Ireland during the last years of the Commonwealth was sad enough. In place of any detailed statement, we shall cite an incident which took place in the year 1657, in the Parliament of the United Kingdom at Westminster. At that time it was intended to impose a fresh tax on Ireland, and during the discussion of the subject in the House of Commons, Major Morgan, the member for County Wicklow, rose and protested against it. The country was still in ruins,¹ he said, and apart from the cost of rebuilding churches, market-houses and law-courts, the inhabitants had laid a heavy burden on themselves, in the shape of rewards which they had to pay for the destruction of wild animals. "We have," he continued, "three burdensome beasts to destroy that lay heavy burden upon us. The first beast is the wolf, on whom we lay £5 a head, and £10 if a bitch ; the second beast is a priest, on whose head we lay £10, if he is eminent, more ; the third beast is a Tory, on whose head, if he is a public Tory, we lay £20, and 40s. if he is a private Tory." What a terrible social condition is here indicated !

¹ For Morgan's speech in Parliament in 1657, see Prendergast, p. 150.

CHAPTER V.

IRELAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF CHARLES II. TO THE TREATY OF LIMERICK (1691): THE PERIOD OF THE RESTORATION.

CROMWELL'S iron hand had pressed cruelly on the unhappy Irish nation, and it was, therefore, not surprising that after the death of this ruler and the short administration of his son, hope revived in every Irish heart when, on the 25th May, 1660, Charles II. landed at Dover, in order to ascend the throne of his ancestors. The people of Ireland expected that their lives would be brightened by the advent of the new sovereign; that he would restore to them their property; and they were encouraged in the indulgence of such a hope by the fact that in 1650, Charles, himself an exile, had given them a written promise to the effect that all the Irish who had ever sworn allegiance to his father should be reinstated in their possessions.¹

In furtherance of this object, agents appointed by the Irish entered into active communication with the king. They made a proposal that, after the issuing of a general amnesty, their fellow-countrymen should again be placed in possession of their estates, but that, for a certain number of years, a third part of the revenues derived from the estates should be devoted to the compensation of those soldiers and adventurers, as far as their claims could be established, who had been planted there under Cromwell's administration.² The greater portion of the soldiers, indeed, had received real estate in lieu of arrears of pay, and the same was the case with the majority of the merchants and traders who, in place of the large sums

¹ See Carte's "Life of Ormond," ii. p. 129.

² *Ibid.* ii. p. 214.

of money which they had advanced to Parliament, were endowed with Irish landed property. These were claims which the king was manifestly bound to respect. But the sums offered by the Irish were far from being sufficient to satisfy the demands of any one of these interests ; beside which, an agreement of this nature would have been an affront to public opinion in England, which was by no means disposed to surrender the dearly bought ascendancy of Protestantism in Ireland. By this arrangement, too, the king would have forfeited the quit-rents which he at present received from the settlers. These combined reasons, therefore, decided the fickle monarch to disregard the promise he had formerly made to the Irish, and on the recommendation of Lord Broghill and Sir Arthur Mervyn, instead of reinstating the Irish in their possessions, and satisfying the claims of Cromwell's settlers, a decision of a wholly different character was announced by the publication of the royal declaration of November 1660, which formed the basis of the Act of Settlement.¹

This Act provided that all those Irish settlers on whom lands had been bestowed prior to the 7th May, 1659, as well as all old soldiers who had received land instead of pay, were to remain in possession of such ; all "innocent Papists" were, naturally, to have their estates restored to them, but were to resign the land which they had received in Connaught. No one, however, was reckoned as belonging to this class who, before the truce of the 16th September, 1643, had been in any way implicated in the rebellion, or who, before Ormond's peace of 1649, had joined the party of the papal nuncio. All those persons who might primarily have taken part in the rebellion, but had subsequently submitted to the king and remained loyal to him, were not entitled to the restitution of their property, but were allowed to remain in possession of the lands granted to them in Connaught by the Commonwealth ; while those of their number who had afterwards served the

¹ The Act of Settlement is to be found in the Irish Statutes, 14 and 15 Charles II., c. 2. Comp. also Leland's "History of Ireland," iii. p. 414 ; Carte, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 216-222 ; and Lecky's "History of England," ii. p. 175.

king during his residence in foreign lands, and had received no grant of land in Connaught, were permitted to claim their former estates, but only on condition of making adequate compensation to the present proprietors.

There were, accordingly, many of the Irish who were debarred from any share in the restitution of property ; but, as Lord Ormond justly observed, it would have been necessary to discover a new Ireland in order to meet even all the recognised claims.¹ Seeing, therefore, that it was impossible to satisfy both parties at the same time, the only question that remained to be settled was as to which of them must be sacrificed. In this contest the Irish were undoubtedly at a disadvantage ; they were poor, and without powerful friends, while the English settlers were in possession of the richest territory, and, consequently, enjoyed both power and influence. Thus, the Irish Parliament which met in 1601 consisted almost wholly of Englishmen, the Irish being virtually unrepresented. The most influential of the king's counsellors, Clarendon and Ormond, the latter now advanced to the rank of duke, and since 1661 reinvested with the lord-lieutenancy of the Irish kingdom, were more closely allied to the colonists, both by religion and descent, than they were to the native Catholic population ; and while the English settlers who sat in the Irish Parliament contrived to gain the favour of the powerful viceroy by voting him a gift of £30,000, the Irish were impolitic enough to convert into an enemy the man who wielded such potent influence. Moreover, in their dealings with the king, they likewise displayed much indiscretion, demanding as "an act of justice that which the king, at the utmost, granted as a favour and an act of grace." Consequently, the sovereign speedily lost all sympathy for the Irish, and in a short time declared that he "was in favour of an English interest being established in Ireland."² This plainly revealed to the Irish that they, and not the English, were to be the victims.

Meanwhile, the proceedings in connection with the appli-

¹ See Carte, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 240.

² *Ibid.* *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 236 ; comp. *ibid.*, pp. 241, 242.

cation of the Act made but slow progress.¹ A commission was appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the claims of 4,000 "innocent Papists" who desired the restitution of their property. During the first three months 185 cases came on for hearing, and in only 19 of them was it possible to prove any actual offence against the parties. It now became evident that should a corresponding result be obtained in the examinations which were to follow, the available means for the compensation of all the Irish claims would be utterly inadequate; and the Irish Protestants, accordingly, began to be apprehensive that ultimately their estates would be attacked. The temper of the Irish people at that time was ominous and portentous. The Irish House of Commons was loud in its complaints, and the speaker, Sir A. Mervyn, characterised² the times through which they were passing as a critical epoch, in which the established religion was in danger of being undermined by the predominance acquired by popish interests. Officers of the Cromwellian army began to meditate a fresh insurrection in defence of their possessions. Even in England protests were raised against every species of concession made to the Irish.

Thus, the Government was continually being confronted by fresh complications; and finally, after long and arduous deliberation, it arrived at an arrangement which did not, indeed, untie the knot, but cut it: this was the passing, in 1665, of an Act of Explanation,³ which provided that the soldiers and adventurers should relinquish one-third of their possessions, and that the Irish should retain two-thirds of the land which they held in September, 1663. The demands of all those persons whose claims had not yet been adjudicated upon were rejected, with the exception of about twenty Catholic families, who were reinstated in their possessions by special favour. The final result was that, whereas in 1641 two-thirds of the entire land of Ireland was in the hands of Irish Catholics, after the execution of the Act of Settlement, two-

¹ See Leland's "History of Ireland," iii. p. 431.

² Comp. Leland, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 433.

³ This Act is contained in Irish Statutes, 17 and 18 Charles II. c. 2. Comp. Carte, ii. p. 304; Leland, iii. p. 440.

thirds of the entire land was in the occupation of English Protestants,¹ and that close upon 3,000 Irish proprietors had been irrevocably and for ever driven from their patrimonial estates.

The mother-country resolutely supported the interests of those of her sons who had emigrated to Ireland, and her interpositions in their behalf materially tended to uphold the claims of the Cromwellian colonists to their possessions. But there was a limit beyond which the solidarity of interests did not extend. As soon as England's fears were aroused that the colony could injure her commercially or economically, the bond of a common descent and a common faith was immediately forgotten by the mother-country. A characteristic fact is, that at the very time in which the ruling classes in England were so warmly espousing the cause of the Cromwellian settlers to the property they had acquired, a violent contest arose between England and her *protégés* with reference to a matter of mercantile policy, which eventually resulted in the sacrifice of the economic interests of the weaker country.

England began, in the first place, to be jealous of Irish commerce. The geographical situation of the island, and its excellent harbours, had placed Ireland in a position peculiarly favourable for carrying on a trade with the American colonies; but this very circumstance awakened the envy of the English shippers, who were so importunate in their complaints to Parliament, that their case was at length made a subject of investigation. The result was, that although Cromwell, in pursuance of a generous and enlightened policy, had, in his Navigation Act, placed England and Ireland on exactly the same footing,² Ireland was completely ignored in the new Act of 1663, and henceforth only English ships were permitted to convey goods to the British colonies.³ This law, which was again confirmed in 1670, not only struck a severe blow at Ireland's colonial traffic, but also occasioned a decline both in the ship-building trade, and in the art of navigation

¹ Comp. Lecky, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 181.

² See Arthur Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans., Lpzg., 1780), ii. p. 276.

³ See Irish Statutes, 15 Charles II., c. 7.

itself ; so that it was no exaggeration when Swift, in 1727, declared that, notwithstanding her magnificent timber, Ireland was not one ship richer than she was fifty years before, and he might justly affirm that “the conveniency of ports and harbours which nature so liberally bestowed on this kingdom, is of no more use to Ireland than a beautiful prospect is to a man shut up in a dungeon.”¹

Ireland was destined, however, to be still further injured by English legislation. The copious rainfall and the abundance of moisture for which this island is remarkable are not, it is true, favourable to the cultivation of corn ; nevertheless, it is owing to these that the land is covered with that wondrously green carpet which has given to it the name of the Emerald Isle. It was, therefore, very natural that the Irish landowners early turned their attention to cattle-grazing, from which they also realized considerable profits. Just at this particular time, it happened that the English landowners were experiencing a falling off in their rents, which was really attributable to various causes, but principally to the war with Holland. They, however, imagined that this reduction of their incomes could only be due to the importation of Irish cattle, which overstocked the English markets, and thus kept down the price of English cattle ; and, as in the Parliament as then constituted the control of the legislature was in the hands of the landed gentry, they succeeded, in 1663, in passing an Act which prohibited the importation into England of Irish fat cattle after the 1st July of each year. These measures speedily appearing insufficient, another bill was introduced, in 1665, which absolutely forbade the importation into England of Irish cattle, whether fat or otherwise, alive or slaughtered. Some of the more enlightened members of the House, it must be admitted, resisted this proposal. Sir Heneage Finch, especially, pointed out that this bill would be the source of endless misery to Ireland, while at the same time it would be of no service to the English themselves. It might, it was true, be the means of suppressing the inconvenient competition of

¹ Compare Swift’s “Short View of Ireland,” in “Works” (ed. Roscoe), vol. ii. p. 80.

the Irish graziers, but inasmuch as Irish cattle were, for the most part, paid for in English manufactures, English commerce would necessarily suffer in the same proportion in which the purchasing power of the Irish decreased. Moreover, when, in consequence of the supply of cheap Irish meat being cut off, an advance should take place in the price of meat, English firms would be compelled to pay their work-people higher wages, and thus the cost of English manufactures would render them too dear for exportation. But what availed these considerations with an assembly representing only class interests, as was the case with the Parliament of England at that day? The bill became law, and was immediately followed by many of the results which had been predicted. Numerous Irish farmers and landowners were reduced to poverty, and the trade of Ireland, three-fourths of which had been carried on with England, sustained very sensible injury.¹

The Duke of Ormond, it is true, honestly endeavoured to heal the wounds which had been inflicted on his native land by the foolish policy of the mother-country. He obtained a proclamation from the king, conferring upon the Irish liberty to trade with foreign nations, hoping thus, in some measure, to render nugatory the unwise prohibition against traffic with the colonies.

He also paid especial attention to developing the industrial resources of the country, as a means of supplying the impoverished land with fresh sources of wealth. He interested himself chiefly in promoting the manufacture of linen, and sent suitable persons to Holland in order to study the improvements which had been introduced in that country in the production of linen fabrics. In conjunction with Sir William Temple, he was instrumental in bringing 500 families from Brabant to Ireland, while a number of French families from Rochelle also planted themselves there, and in consequence

¹ Comp. Irish Statutes, 18 Charles II., c. 2; also 32 Charles II., c. 2. The occasion and the consequences of the prohibition of the export of cattle are fully dealt with by Carte, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 317-337; Leland, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 442; in addition to which consult Clarendon's "Autobiography," vol. iv. pp. 204-233.

of receiving this stimulus from without, the Irish linen manufacture considerably gained in importance.

Still more valuable, perhaps, were his efforts to encourage the woollen manufacture. He erected a factory in Clonmel for the weaving of woollen cloths, and invited 500 Walloons to take up their residence in Ireland in order to work it ; and, subsequently, a second factory in Carrick also owed its existence to him. This fresh branch of industry rendered very timely aid to the sadly hampered agriculturalists of Ireland ; for the Irish pastures being admirably adapted to sheep-grazing, the landowners, who were forbidden to export their cattle, now devoted themselves to the production of wool for the supply of the woollen factories.¹

But in addition to economic questions, the ecclesiastical disorders of the reign of Charles II. also demand some notice. On the accession of this sovereign the Anglican Church was restored to its former position in Ireland as well as in England ; the bishops were recalled to their deserted dioceses, and tithes were again levied as in the olden days. Strenuous efforts were made to keep dissenters well in check ; Catholics were prohibited from removing out of one province into another, without permission of the authorities ; while they were, at the same time, forbidden to hold public meetings, and were thus reduced to a condition in which it was impossible for them to bring their sufferings and grievances before the Crown.

With the object of demonstrating the loyalty of the Catholics and protecting them from further oppressive measures, Peter Walsh, a Franciscan monk, originated a proposal to present an address to the king ; he, accordingly, drew up a remonstrance,² wherein a protest was entered against the belief widely prevalent in England, that toleration of Catholicism was incompatible with safety to the state. This document further set forth that Catholics everywhere regard the king as supreme

¹ For evidence of Ormond's fostering care for the industries of Ireland, see Carte, ii. p. 340 *et seq.*; also Leland, *loc cit.*, iii. pp. 448, 449.

² With reference to the presentation of the remonstrance, and the disputes arising from it, see especially Peter Walsh's "History of the Irish Remonstrance," First Treatise ; Comp. also Leland, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 459 *et seq.*

ruler in all things temporal ; and that neither the pope nor any other spiritual authority has the right or power to release any subject of a non-Catholic monarch from his oath of allegiance to that sovereign. The remonstrance especially branded as godless and unchristian the doctrine that any Catholic subject whatever has the right to kill, or in any other wise, injure a sovereign professing a different faith. This remonstrance was delivered, in due course, to Ormond, who drew attention to the fact that it was unsigned ; whereupon an appeal was made throughout the country for signatures. But although numerous members of the nobility, and many distinguished Catholic commoners willingly appended their names to this document, the majority of the bishops, and many of the inferior clergy, declined to sign it ; and the papal nuncio at Brussels declared that some of the principles enunciated in the remonstrance were such as had formerly been condemned by the apostolic see. From this time the Catholics of Ireland were split up into two sections : one of which endorsed the principles contained in the remonstrance, and hence were called remonstrants ; while their opponents acquired the name of anti-remonstrants. On several occasions violent disputes occurred between the two parties with reference to certain ecclesiastical appointments, and at the National Synod held in Dublin, 1666, the excitement ran so high that a furious quarrel ensued.

As long as Ormond was at the helm of affairs, the loyal remonstrants were regarded by the Government with favour ; but when, after much intriguing, the ministry known as the Cabal, which in 1667 had ejected the Chancellor Clarendon, also succeeded a year later in displacing the chancellor's friend the Duke of Ormond, a complete revolution took place in this respect. At the same time that the new English ministry, which numbered among its members two declared Catholics, was lending its countenance to the Romanising tendencies of the Court of England, it happened that in Ireland a number of Irish Catholics¹— and those, strange to say, like Colonel

¹ See Carte, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 414 *et seq.*

Talbot and his brother Peter, Archbishop of Dublin, belonging to the party of anti-remonstrants—likewise stood high in the favour of the new lord-lieutenant, Lord Berkeley of Stratton, who was appointed to the vice-regal office in the year 1670. They contrived, by an unscrupulous persecution of their opponents, to turn the influence thus enjoyed by them to good account, with the result that the greater number of the loyal clergy among the remonstrants were deprived of their livings. Simultaneously, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, relying upon the favour of the Court, and casting off the reserve which, in view of the exclusively Protestant character of the Government, the Catholics had for some time past imposed upon themselves, publicly assumed the rank and pomp of a prince of the Church.

The favour extended to Talbot and his party by the lord-lieutenant encouraged them to take a further step. They sent a deputation to the king, with instructions to lay before him all the grievances of the Catholics; and this deputation actually succeeded in obtaining the appointment of a commission, authorised to institute inquiries as to the means by which all property then in the possession of Protestants in Ireland had been acquired, and to discover how far those methods were in accordance with the royal declaration of 1660.

This attack on the Act of Settlement was the cause of widespread agitation and apprehension in the Protestant circles of both England and Ireland, in which circles the toleration accorded to the Catholics was already regarded with but scant approval. The English Parliament was besieged with petitions from the colonists of Cromwell's time, praying for protection for their allotments. Lamentations over the growth of popery were heard on every hand, and, ultimately, there remained no course open to the ministry except to recall Lord Berkeley, and replace him by the Earl of Essex. At the same time the English Parliament presented an address¹ to the king, which, beyond all other things,

¹ For the downfall of Berkeley and the address of the English Parliament, see particularly Carte, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 429; and Leland, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 466.

demanded the maintenance of the Settlements Act ; but in addition to this, it also contained a petition for the dissolution of all monasteries, the banishment of Catholic priests, and the deposition of Colonel Talbot. The feeling of hostility to Catholicism, which so widely prevailed in England, thus received clear and definite expression.

The king's reply was to the effect that it was his purpose to maintain the Act of Settlement ; and by holding out this promise, and making certain small concessions, he succeeded in calming the excited public mind, and by this means prevented the adoption of harsher measures against the Catholics.

Lord Essex, however, felt himself but ill at ease as lord-lieutenant of a country which, as he expressed it, was torn and rent by every faction ; he, therefore, welcomed the opportunity which presented itself, in 1677, of relinquishing his office. And now there appeared once more at the head of the Irish administration a man whose name has so frequently recurred in these pages. For the third time the post of lord-lieutenant was occupied by the Duke of Ormond, a position which his moderation, his knowledge of affairs, and his lengthened experience eminently qualified him to fill.

Ormond had not long been in office when religious disorders broke out afresh in the land. The false rumour of an intended popish plot which, in the year 1678, was circulated in England by Oates and Tong, stirred up, as is well known, religious fanaticism in that country to an intense degree. Similar reports were also disseminated in the sister island ; but here they were supplemented by the intelligence that certain individuals had been hired by the pope to murder the viceroy, and that the Archbishop of Dublin himself was privy to the plot. Rumours of this nature only too soon gained credence among the fanatical multitudes ; and although by no means convinced of the existence of a conspiracy, Ormond felt himself compelled, on political grounds, to take some action. He therefore ordered the arrest of the Archbishop of Dublin, who at that time was dangerously ill ; temporarily closed all the Catholic places of worship, and ordered all soldiers, both officers and men, to return into garrison. The English

Government was, however, not satisfied with these proceedings, and commanded the lord-lieutenant to arrest Lord Mountgarret, an old man of eighty, in addition to his son and Colonel Talbot.¹

There were two principal reasons which, at that time, induced many an English statesman, although personally disbelieving the myth about a popish conspiracy, to join his voice to that of the multitude in the cry of "No Popery." Some of the politicians of the day believed that, by the suppression of their religion, the Irish would be goaded to insurrection, and that thus an opportunity would be afforded to the English to completely exterminate the hostile race, and appropriate their lands. Others, as Lord Shaftesbury, imagined that by inflaming and exciting religious fanaticism, they would be able to compass the downfall of the Duke of Ormond, who had invariably counselled a policy of moderation towards the Catholics; and impelled by such motives, they did not scruple to employ these base means for the accomplishment of their ends.

True, these personal opponents of Ormond's failed for some time to attain their object, but, none the less, was the lord-lieutenant powerless to prevent an innocent man from falling a victim to the religious fanaticism thus aroused. Oliver Plunket, the Catholic Archbishop of Armagh, was taken to England, and there accused of having conspired with France against England, and of having endeavoured, by means of the contributions of the clergy, secretly to enlist an army of 6,000 Irishmen. Without a shadow of proof he was condemned to death, and executed at Tyburn on the 1st July, 1681.²

Finally, after the lapse of several years, the enemies of Ormond succeeded, by their unremitting aspersions, in damaging his reputation with the king. On the 6th October, 1684, Ormond received a royal letter, in which the monarch announced to him his intention of recalling him, and conferring

¹ Comp. Carte, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 477 *et seq.*; Leland, iii. p. 473.

² For this subject the "Life of Archbishop Plunket," by the Rev. Dr. Moran, Bishop of Ossory, is especially valuable. Comp. also Leland, iii. p. 480; Carte ii., App. p. 109.

the lord-lieutenancy on Lord Rochester. But on the 6th February, 1685, before Ormond had retired from his post, the king died, and was succeeded by his brother James, whose ascension of the throne was productive of fresh complications for Ireland.

It is a matter of notoriety how this sovereign, having, prior to his accession, openly embraced Catholicism, set before him, as the one task of his life, the establishment of the Catholic religion throughout the whole of his dominions ; and how, in the prosecution of this design, he exhibited not a trace of statesmanlike foresight or consideration. In carrying out his plans he naturally felt himself drawn towards the Irish, who for the most part were his co-religionists, and he was, accordingly, particularly concerned to transfer the most important offices of State in Ireland to the Catholics.

Shortly after James ascended the throne, Ormond was commanded to leave Ireland and proceed to London, there to devote himself to the duties of his office in the household, as lord steward. The functions of the lord-lieutenancy were now divided, the civil department being entrusted to Lord Henry Clarendon, an English Protestant, while the command of the army was confided to Colonel Richard Talbot, a Catholic, whom Ormond, as we have seen, at one time caused to be arrested, but who had recently been raised to the rank of Earl of Tyrconnel.¹

The earl was a man of low character and coarse manners ; but the circumstance of his being a Catholic was, in the king's eyes, a sufficient qualification for this lofty post. Once invested with authority, he made it his chief aim to crush the English Protestant colony in Ireland, and to restore the country to the aboriginal race. This intention was visible in all the acts of his administration, and Lord Clarendon was too feeble to offer any effectual resistance to his schemes. Thus, in carrying out the royal command to disarm the

¹ For information respecting Tyrconnel, see Macaulay's clever sketch of him, which is, nevertheless, too evidently written with undue bias, in his "History of England since the Accession of James II." (Lond., 1849), vol. ii. pp. 48-51.

population, Tyrconnel contrived, while utterly despoiling the Protestant gentry of every weapon, to leave the Catholic peasants and farmers in possession of their arms. In the army he discharged a large number of Protestant officers, and filled their places with Catholics ; and he also proceeded on the same principles in enlisting private soldiers.¹ He then caused the charters of incorporation possessed by the various towns to be called in, and these were so altered that two-thirds of the municipal offices were conferred upon Catholics.² The king gave his assent to all these measures, and declared that he regarded the majority of the colonists as his enemies, for which reason he considered it to be all the more necessary that the civil and military administration should be in the hands of his friends.³

Lord Clarendon had meanwhile been a compliant observer of these acts, but notwithstanding his docility and obsequiousness, the king ultimately grew weary of him. He was, accordingly, removed from his post, and the functions which he had hitherto discharged were transferred to the Earl of Tyrconnel. The anxiety of Tyrconnel to procure for his co-religionists the most influential offices in the state was now redoubled, and he also endeavoured to find ways and means of restoring to them their lost estates. He hated the Act of Settlement, which had ejected the Irish from their possessions, with all his soul, and he designated it “a foul thing, a roguish thing, and a damned thing.”⁴ The abrogation of this Act, however, could not be lightly accomplished. In the first place, it would be necessary to have the consent of the Irish Parliament, and this body was, at present, mainly composed of Cromwell’s settlers, or their descendants ; but as the parliamentary representatives were chiefly elected by the municipal corporations, and as the laws regulating the constitution of

¹ See Macaulay, *loc. cit.* (vol. ii. pp. 142, 144), who here takes as his authority the correspondence between Rochester and Clarendon.

² See Leland, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 503.

³ See the letter of James to Clarendon, of the 6th April, 1686. (Comp. Macaulay, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 142.) As illustrating the king’s views, the despatch of Barillon, the French ambassador to Louis XIV., is valuable. (Macaulay, ii. pp. 431, 432.)

⁴ See Macaulay, ii. p. 146.

these bodies had recently been altered in favour of the Catholics, there was a reasonable hope that, in course of time, a legislative assembly would be elected more favourable to the abolition of the Settlement Act than the one now in existence.

But before the measures adopted by Tyrconnel had had time to become operative, the Revolution, which broke out in the year 1688, swept James from the throne. His successor, William III., tried in the beginning to attach the lord-lieutenant to his side, and entered into communication with him. But even had Tyrconnel ever seriously entertained the idea of an alliance with William, the temper of the Irish Catholic party at that time was such that he would not have ventured to proceed farther with his negotiations. Indeed, when the Irish first heard rumours of Tyrconnel's relations with William, they threatened to set fire to his palace, and burn him with it.¹ These considerations alone would have sufficed to render Tyrconnel faithful in his allegiance to King James.

He, therefore, despatched an envoy to St. Germains, where the fugitive king was then holding his court, who was commissioned to inform James that Ireland was expecting him. In response to this invitation, James II. undertook an expedition to Ireland, accompanied by the French ambassador, D'Avaux, and by some troops, under the command of the German General Rosen, and on the 12th March, 1689, arrived in Kinsale Harbour. On the 24th March he made an entry into Dublin, amid the rejoicings of the Catholic population, after which he summoned a parliament to meet in the capital on the 7th May, 1689. In the meantime, he resolved to march northward, and, in the first place, advanced upon Londonderry, which had declared against him. Although the inhabitants of this town had neither soldiers, ammunition, nor provisions, they, nevertheless, came to the heroic determination to defend themselves. Having chosen a clergyman named Walker as their leader, under his direction they sustained a siege of close upon four months' duration with so

¹ Comp. the despatch of D'Avaux to Louis XIV. of the 4th April, 1689, which is to be found in Ranke's "Englische Geschichte," vi. p. 291.

much fortitude and endurance, that the siege of Londonderry is accounted one of the most memorable incidents in the annals of British warfare. At the expiration of four months succour arrived, and the enemy was forced to retire.¹

The storming of Londonderry having proved a failure, James returned to Dublin, where, on the appointed day, he opened Parliament in person.² Owing to the fact that great numbers of Protestants, and these mostly of the wealthier classes, had left Ireland on the news of James's landing, and repaired to England, the Protestant element was but very feebly represented in both Houses of Parliament. The entire Protestant representation in the Upper House consisted of four spiritual and five temporal peers, while in the Lower House, out of 250 members, only six were Protestants, the great majority of the representatives being sons of those persons who had been deprived of their estates under Cromwell's administration.

It was to be foreseen, therefore, that the policy of a parliament thus composed would be neither a calm nor a prudent one, but that it would be marked by acts of revenge and deeds of retaliation ; and, in truth, the greater number of its measures³ were framed with the double object of utterly destroying the influence of the English colony and the ascendancy of Protestant interests in Ireland, and of investing the native Irish with supreme control throughout the country. The first step which was taken by this Parliament was to constitute the Irish Parliament the highest legislative authority in the land by the repeal of the ancient statute of 1495, called Poyning's Act, which established the dependence of the Irish Parliament on the Government of England. The next measure passed by this assembly was an Act of

¹ The siege is described by Walker himself in "A True Account of the Siege of Londonderry" (Lond., 1689).

² For the history of this Parliament, by far the most valuable work is "The Present State of the Protestants in Ireland," by King ; comp. also Leland, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 536 *et seq.*; among more recent writers, Lecky (ii. p. 182 *et seq.*), and Macaulay (vol. iii., p. 202 *et seq.*), whose brilliant account is, however, not free from partiality.

³ A list of the Acts of this Parliament is to be found in Plowden's "Historical Review," vol. i. App.

Toleration, which conceded religious freedom to every confession, and thus abolished the precedence hitherto claimed by the Anglican Church,—a measure, the tendency of which could certainly only be approved, but which, it is to be regretted, remained only a dead letter, as shortly afterward, in direct contravention of this Act, a violent persecution of the Protestants commenced in every province.

The next business was the regulation of ecclesiastical tithes. It was not surprising that the Irish Catholic felt it to be a heavy burden upon him that, although his own priests were entirely supported by the freewill offerings of their parishioners, he should be compelled to pay tithes to the teachers of an alien faith. This anomaly was removed by Parliament, and it was decreed that the Catholics should henceforth pay tithes exclusively to their own priests. One hardship was, however, associated with this law for the Anglican clergy, who, having entered upon their duties relying upon the permanence and security of Irish institutions, were entitled, by its provisions, to no compensation for the reduction which this Act occasioned in their incomes. This measure was followed by a revision of titles. It has already been mentioned that Tyrconnel and the entire Irish Nationalist party were inspired by a profound hatred of the Act of Settlement; consequently, they now seized the opportunity to abrogate it. The Irish who had been driven from their estates by Cromwell were now to be reinstated in their possessions, from which the Cromwellian colonists were, in their turn, to be ejected without receiving either one farthing as compensation, or even being refunded for outlay on buildings and improvements; the thirty years undisturbed possession which they had enjoyed being considered an ample and all-sufficient equivalent. Only those persons were entitled to compensation who had come into possession of their estates by purchase or inheritance, the requisite funds for which compensation were to be derived from the confiscated property of the adherents of William III.¹ The effect of this Act was that the

¹ Macaulay (vol. iii, p. 211) lays much stress upon the great injustice which was involved in depriving the innocent purchasers of Irish land

sacred rights of property were once more assailed, and even James must have had a presentiment that the enforcement of this law would involve an utter subversion of the existing order of things, for, on the advice of some of his friends in England, who justly regarded this measure as a declaration of war by the Irish National party against the English colony, he himself exhorted the Parliament to moderation. At first he hoped the bill would be thrown out by the Lords, and again he considered the advisability of dissolving Parliament. Such a step, however, in view of the prevailing temper of the country, would have completely extinguished the king's influence in Ireland. Already, in the course of their deliberations on this measure, the Nationalists had declared that should the king refuse to grant them their rights, they would not consider themselves bound to serve him in war. James therefore yielded, and allowed the bill to become law.¹

The last law passed during this session was one relating to high treason, a measure which has justly been termed the most cruel Act passed by this Parliament. According to the provisions of this enactment, all those Irish subjects who had gone to England and taken refuge with William III., and who, before a certain approximate date, should not have sworn allegiance to their just and lawful sovereign, James II., should be declared guilty of high treason, condemned to death and to the confiscation of their goods. James did not withhold his sanction, even, from this, notwithstanding the fact that one of its clauses restricted the king's prerogative to pardon. A list was, accordingly, drawn up, containing the names of the proclaimed persons to the number of about 2,000, in which were included half the entire body of Irish peers. This catalogue, to which personal enmity or a private grudge may have added the name of many an innocent man, was made the basis of proceedings which were conducted without any careful investigation, and which frequently had only common rumour to justify them. Not being able to obtain of their possessions, but he makes not the slightest reference to this compensation. In contrast hereto, comp. Lecky, ii. p. 185 *et seq.*

² See the despatch of D'Avaux to Louis XIV., of the 3rd June, 1689, in Ranke's "Englische Geschichte," vi. p. 298.

possession of the persons of their adversaries,¹ this law was only of moment in so far as it authorized the seizure of the estates of the fugitives, which, it was hoped, would furnish ample means for carrying on the war, as well as for the compensation of those landowners who had come into possession of Irish estates by purchase.

— But the days of Irish domination were soon told. At the end of July, 1689, James prorogued his Parliament, and in August of the same year, General Schomberg, with 10,000 men, landed in Ireland for the purpose of reconquering that country for his master, William III.² The first year, it is true, was barren of any definite results, for the loose discipline of the army, and its insufficient equipment, compelled the British commander to fortify himself in Dundalk, and refrain from all operations involving risk. Instead of seizing this opportunity to attack the British troops, which, in addition to their disorganization, were also considerably decimated by the pestilence, James, too, decided to get into winter quarters, and likewise forbore to attempt any great feat of arms.

The following spring both parties received important reinforcements. James obtained an auxiliary force of 7,000 troops from France, under Lauzun,³ upon which William also perceived the necessity of strengthening his army. On the 14th June, 1690, William himself landed in the island with 30,000 well disciplined troops, and in the course of a few weeks Ireland's fate was decided by the brilliant, but, owing to the loss of Schomberg, dearly bought victory at the battle of the Boyne. James proved himself a coward in battle, and, like a poltroon, when the contest was over, he abandoned both his

¹ The assertion of Macaulay (vol. iii. p. 219), who, in this case, has mainly relied upon the by no means unbiased representations of King, to the effect that the lists of the proscribed were mercilessly kept secret, has been conclusively proved by Lecky to be incorrect (Lecky, vol. ii. pp. 191, 192).

² Details of the war are to be found in Macaulay, *loc. cit.*, chaps. xiv., xv., xvi.

³ The despatches of this French general, which are of great value for the consideration of the campaign of 1690, are to be found in Ranke's "Englische Geschichte" (bd. ix. pp. 1-24), which work also contains some extracts from the diary of a Jacobite, having special reference to these operations in Ireland.

followers and their cause. In wild haste he fled to Waterford, and immediately afterward set sail for France.

While the conqueror was making his triumphal entry into Dublin, the Irish resolved to retire beyond the Shannon, and there continue the war. And, although the French auxiliaries soon left the country, the Irish succeeded for a considerable time in maintaining the struggle with the British troops, who, after William's departure, were commanded successively by Marlborough and General Ginkel. Athlone fell in June, 1691, and shortly after this, Ginkel defeated the Irish at Aghrim, a victory which was speedily followed by the capture of Galway, and on the 14th August, 1691, the English troops laid siege to Limerick, the last buttress of the Irish cause.

After enduring a siege of six weeks, and seeing no prospect of relief arriving, the besieged decided to capitulate, hoping that, by a voluntary surrender, they would at least be enabled to secure for themselves religious freedom. The conditions of the capitulation were drawn up on the 2nd October, and signed on the 3rd October, 1691. The articles of the Treaty of Limerick¹ fall under two divisions, political and military : and under the first division it was provided that the Catholics of Ireland should enjoy the free exercise of their religion, as they had enjoyed it in the reign of Charles II. The articles under the second head provided that all the inhabitants of Limerick, and all the officers and men forming the garrison of that town, or of any other fortified place, should, on condition of taking the oath of allegiance to King William and Queen Mary—which was the only oath to be demanded of them,—be protected in all their estates, rights, privileges and immunities which they held in the reign of Charles II. No legal proceedings should be taken against any person included in the capitulation, on account of any deed committed in the course of the war, nor should the nobility and gentry be deprived of the right to carry arms. “And their majesties,” the document proceeds, “as soon as their affairs will permit them to summon a Parliament, will endeavour to procure the said

¹ A literal transcript of the treaty is to be met with in Leland, *loc. cit.*, vol. iii. App. p. 619 *et seq.*; also in Plowden's “Historical Review.”

Roman Catholics such further security as may preserve them from any disturbance on account of their religion." These articles were signed by the Lords Justices of Ireland and General Ginkel, and subsequently ratified by their majesties.

The division of the treaty containing the military provisions granted to the officers and privates of the garrison permission to leave the country, with all their goods and chattels ; and in case they desired to settle in France, Baron Ginkel undertook to provide them with the necessary transport ships. Some thousands took advantage of this offer to enter the French service, in order to render assistance to the arms of Louis XIV. against England and other Protestant powers. A stream of emigrants poured into France, whereby the Irish fatherland was robbed of its most vigorous military strength, and its national energy permanently weakened.

The brief interlude of Celtic independence was thus brought to an end by the Treaty of Limerick. The decrees of the Irish Parliament were annulled, and all things reverted to the conditions existing in the time of Charles II. Nor was the customary sequel to every Irish rebellion wanting in this instance : all those who had taken part in the movement were sentenced to the forfeiture of their goods. Owing to the operation of the Treaty of Limerick being confined to the counties Limerick, Cork, Mayo, Sligo, Clare, and Kerry, a vast number of the adherents of James II. lost their property. With the exception of five or six Catholic families who, by a special act of royal favour, were reinstated in their possessions, it was only the inhabitants of these counties—comparatively few in number—who were entitled, under the treaty, to claim the restitution of the property they had enjoyed in the reign of Charles II. Accordingly, after the provisions of the Treaty of Limerick had been executed, only one-eleventh part of the land of Ireland, which was capable of cultivation, remained in the hands of the Irish,¹ and ever since this period an enormous majority of the Celtic population have been doomed to an existence of drudgery and misery, either as small farmers,

¹ Comp. Beaumont's "L'Irlande sociale, politique, et religieuse" (Par., 2ed., 1881), vol. i. p. 91.

labourers, or beggars. Infinitely sad is the picture presented thirty years after this last confiscation by Jonathan Swift, a writer intimately acquainted with Irish life. "It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town, or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by five or six children, all in rags, and importuning every passenger for an alms, children who are growing up without training and without instruction, and who, because they have no means of subsistence, will ultimately develop into thieves."¹

¹ See Swift : "A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from being a Burden to their Parents and Country" (1729), in "Works" (Roscoe), ii. pp. 99-102.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION OF THE IRISH IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE TREATY OF LIMERICK (1691), AND THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE III. (1760).

As we have already mentioned, the first article of the Treaty of Limerick stipulated that the Catholics of Ireland should enjoy such liberties and privileges as they had enjoyed in the reign of Charles II. It is true that the sanction of Parliament was necessary for the ratification of this compact, but the Irish naturally supposed that the assent of this august assembly could not be withheld from a treaty solemnly concluded by the Government at a time when Parliament was not sitting. In this supposition they probably reckoned on the influence of William, who was animated by a spirit of genuine toleration, and had, before his expedition to England, intimated to the German emperor that it was his intention to exert himself to the utmost to effect the repeal of those penal laws against the Catholics which had been in existence since the reign of Elizabeth. He had, moreover, before the battle of Aghrim, offered the Irish Catholics, on condition of their voluntary surrender, the free exercise of their religion, the half of the churches in the kingdom, and the half of their ancient possessions.¹ They might, therefore, naturally have

¹ For the transactions between William III. and the emperor, see Ranke's "Englische Geschichte," bd. vi. p. 208. From a letter of Charles Wogan, a nephew of Tyrconnel, to Swift (see Swift's "Works," ed. Roscoe, vol. ii. pp. 667-678), it appears that the king had offered the Irish "the free exercise of their religion, half the churches of the kingdom, half the employments, civil and military, too, if they pleased; and even the moiety of their ancient properties." I make a literal extract of this portion of the letter because one of the critics of the present work (*Kreuzzeitung*, 29th August, 1886), has questioned the statement that William III. at one time contemplated the adoption of more righteous measures towards Catholicism.

expected that William would take means to insure the ratification of the treaty by Parliament. But the Irish were doomed to a bitter disappointment in this respect, for all William's wishes and plans were frustrated by the obstinate resistance of the parliamentary majority. The English Parliament was, at that time, almost wholly composed of zealous High Churchmen, who were little disposed to manifest any complaisance towards the Irish Catholics. When, therefore, in December, 1691, the Treaty of Limerick was laid before the House, the conditions upon which alone the English Parliament would consent to sanction it, were that no person should be allowed to sit in either of the two Houses constituting the Irish Parliament who had not previously taken the oath of supremacy, and signed a declaration condemning the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, the worship of images and prayers to the saints, as practised in the Romish Church.¹ The acceptance of these conditions effectually excluded from the Irish Parliament all those persons who had sat in that assembly during the reign of Charles II.

The first infringement, therefore, of the Treaty of Limerick proceeded from England; and since that day Limerick has been popularly known as "the town of the broken treaty."² This example of intolerance afforded by the English Parliament was speedily followed by the kindred body in Ireland. Since it was now impossible for a Catholic to obtain a seat in either branch of the legislature, the Irish Parliament strictly confined itself to representing and promoting the interests of the Protestant colonists. Inspired by a deep hatred of the Celtic race, it inaugurated a system of legislation, the ostensible object of which was to prevent the growth of popery, but which, to use the words of Burke, was "manifestly the effect of national hatred and scorn towards a conquered people whom the victors delighted to trample upon, and were not afraid to provoke."³

¹ This clause is to be found in Statutes, 3 William and Mary, c. 2; respecting these proceedings, comp. Macaulay, vol. iv. p. 123.

² See "Historisch-politische Blätter," bd. 48, pp. 394-396.

³ See letter to Sir H. Langrishe ("Works," 1808), vi. p. 337.

The first of the laws imposing disabilities¹ upon Catholics was passed in the reign of William III., and this monarch, who, as regards internal politics, was completely helpless, must often have been compelled, at the risk of forfeiting the support of the governing classes, to give his assent to laws against which his inmost soul revolted. The reign of Queen Anne is especially rich in these cruel decrees, but the same course of persecution continued to be pursued long after the accession of the House of Hanover. Every Jacobite insurrection in other parts of the realm, every plot devised against the Government, was followed by new penalties for the Irish Catholics ; and during a period of ten years, Acts of this nature were the only signs of vitality which the Irish Parliament exhibited.

These statutes are of an extremely varied character : thus, one portion of them aimed at gradually depriving the Irish Catholics of all civil rights. As we have above seen, an Act of the English Parliament had already debarred them from the legislative assemblies. But this was not enough. They were further excluded from all public offices, either in the state or the municipalities, from the bar, the universities, the army, the navy ;² and finally, by a law of 1727, they were deprived of the elective franchise. It is characteristic of the spirit of the times that, when this last measure was proposed in the Irish Parliament by Bishop Boulter, not a voice was raised against it.³ A Catholic was not permitted to have swords or firearms in his house, and, according to an Act of George II., any person found contravening this decree was liable to a fine of £20 for the first offence ; for the second, to imprisonment and whipping.⁴ Even the possession of a horse

¹ Burke's opinion of the penal laws, all of which are recorded in the Irish Statute Book, may be learnt from his "Tract on the Popery Laws" ("Works," vol. ix. pp. 323-396). The following may also be consulted : Curry, "The State of the Irish Catholics" ; Beaumont, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 101-118 ; Lecky, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 278-303.

² See Irish Statutes, 9 William III., c. 13 ; 2 Anne, c. 6, § 16 ; 1 George II., c. 20.

³ *Ibid.*, 1 George II., c. 9, § 7. Comp. Mountmorres' "History of the Irish Parliament," i. p. 163.

⁴ Irish Statutes, 10 William III., c. 8 ; 13 George II., c. 6.

valued at more than £5 was forbidden to him, and any Protestant was entitled to stop the carriage of an Irish Catholic, and on offering this sum, to take possession of his most elegant carriage horse.¹

The design of another class of enactments was to render it impossible, or extremely difficult, for an Irish Catholic to become a successful man of business. Thus, an Act of Queen Anne, in the year 1703, ordered that, with the exception of sailors, fishermen, and day-labourers, whose yearly rental did not exceed 40s., no Papist should be allowed to settle in the towns of Limerick and Galway.² In short, all Catholics who endeavoured to establish a business in Ireland were subjected to extraordinary and harassing taxation, known as quarterage.³ Their houses could be appropriated by the militia,⁴ and, as if they were suspected of being the authors of every outrage, the Catholics were bound to make good any damage occasioned by robbers, or hostile privateers.⁵ Another vexatious enactment was passed in 1709, forbidding the employment of more than two apprentices⁶ in any business except the linen manufacture.

But the most cruel and severe measures were those adopted with reference to property. No Papist was allowed to buy land from a Protestant, to inherit, or to receive it as a present from him. He was even forbidden to hold the lease of a farm for his life, and the longest term for which a lease was valid was thirty-one years.⁷ Various writers, well acquainted with the condition of the country, bear testimony to the fact that under these comparatively short leases, the farmer rarely felt disposed to undertake any extensive drainage or other improvements in the land, and that, consequently, the effect of this law was, that the land suffered, and the cultivation of the soil was neglected.⁸ The nett profits of such farms were

¹ 7 William III., c. 4.

² Irish Statutes, 2 Anne, c. 6, § 23.

³ Comp. Burke's "Tracts on the Popery Laws," p. 337.

⁴ Irish Statutes, 2 George I., c. 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 6 George I., c. 3, § 4.

⁶ See 8 Anne, c. 3.

⁷ See 2 Anne, c. 6, § 6.

⁸ See Burke's "Tracts on the Popery Laws" ("Works," vol. ix.), p. 387; also Arthur Young's "Tour in Ireland" (trans. 1780), vol. i. p. 47.

restricted by law to one-third of the rent, and if, as the result of the farmer's industry, or the improvements introduced by him, his profits exceeded that proportion, and he failed to make an immediate announcement of the same in order that a corresponding increase could be made to his rent, his farm passed into the possession of the first Protestant who denounced him to the authorities.¹ The door was thus opened to a highly demoralising system of espionage, and it is a fact that several of the Irish law courts were almost exclusively occupied in investigating cases of this character. In 1739 the Catholics addressed a petition to the king with reference to this subject, in which they explained how they were "daily oppressed by the number of idle and wicked vagrants of this nation, by informing against their little leases and tenements, if the law gets any hold thereof."² Their complaints, however, failed to effect any change.

The Catholic landowner was also deprived of the right to bequeath his property. According to the law of 1703, his estate was equally divided among all his children;³ but should the eldest son abjure Catholicism and join the Anglican Church, he was then entitled to inherit the entire estate. From that moment the father lost the right of disposition over his property, and was merely allowed the administration of it for his life.⁴ This was an utterly immoral enactment "by which," as was justly pointed out in a petition presented to the king by the Catholic gentry in 1777, "a father, contrary to the order of nature, is put under the power of the son ; and one which had broken the hearts of many deserving parents, and entailed poverty and despair on some of the most ancient and opulent families of this kingdom."⁵ Not only did this last clause sow discord and dissension among the various members of a family, but the equal division of the property which it demanded dissipated the estate, and

¹ 2 Anne, c. 6, § 6.

² Lecky, vol. ii. p. 284; derived from the English Record Office.

³ See 2 Anne, c. 6, § 10.

⁴ Comp. 8 Anne, c. 3.

⁵ Contained in Curry's "State of the Irish Catholics," ii. pp. 287-293; the greater portion of it also in "Lecky," iv. p. 465.

thus led to a gradual impoverishment of the Catholic land-owners.”¹

The efforts of the Irish legislature were also directed towards rendering mixed marriages impossible. An Act of the year 1697² had already decreed that no Protestant woman possessed of £500, in either money or land, should marry a Catholic, on pain of forfeiting the whole of her property, which devolved to the nearest Protestant heir; and that any priest who should perform the ceremony of marriage between two persons, without first informing himself respecting their faith, should be liable to a fine of £20. A further law, in 1725,³ enacted that every priest who celebrated a marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant should be liable to the penalty of death; and finally, in 1745,⁴ a law declared all such marriages to be null and void.

Other enactments had special reference to the training and instruction of the Catholics. No Catholic was suffered to accept the guardianship of a child: on the other hand, in accordance with the Act of 1703, every Catholic orphan child was provided by the Chancellor with a Protestant guardian, whose duty it was to see that the child was brought up in the Protestant faith.⁵ It has already been stated that Catholics were excluded from the university; but it was, moreover, forbidden to Catholics to open a school, or to teach in one; and a reward of £10 was offered to the discoverer of a popish schoolmaster.⁶ In order to prevent the wealthier classes of the Catholic population from sending their children to be educated on the Continent, every father found guilty of this act was threatened with the confiscation of all his property.⁷ The Irish Catholics were therefore compelled, either to allow their children to grow up in utter ignorance, or to send them to the

¹ See Burke’s “Tracts on the Popery Laws,” vol. ix. pp. 323–326. A pamphlet published in the year 1755 asserts that, in consequence of this legislation, landed property had depreciated 10 per cent.

² Irish Statutes, 9 William III., c. 3.

³ 12 George I., c. 3.

⁴ 19 George II., c. 13.

⁵ 2 Anne, c. 6, § 4.

⁶ 8 Anne, c. 3, §§ 31, 32.

⁷ Irish Statutes, 2 Anne, c. 6.

Charter Schools, institutions founded by Primate Boulter in the year 1733, mainly for the purpose of making proselytes.¹

This dignitary of the English Church regarded it as his especial mission "to bring over by all Christian means, the great mass of Irish Papists into the Church of England,"² and he conceived that the most effectual means of doing this would be the establishment of the Charter Schools, which, according to the published programme, were founded "to rescue the souls of thousands of poor children from the dangers of popish superstition and idolatry, and their bodies from the miseries of idleness and beggary." Nor is it to be denied that those institutions were remarkably well calculated to insure conversions. The children of poor parents were here gratuitously boarded, lodged, clothed, and educated; the boys were apprenticed to some trade and the girls placed in situations, and even a small dowry apportioned to the latter; but this was all associated with the sole and inviolable condition that the children should be educated in the Protestant faith. And so much exasperation did this single stipulation create, that Irish parents seldom willingly sent their children to these schools. In times of famine these richly endowed establishments were better attended, but immediately the distress was over, the schools were again deserted; and, as a proof of the aversion with which the population of Ireland regarded this violence done to their consciences, it has been stated that, even "during the present century, the Irish peasant seldom passed the school without a curse, or a heart-felt sigh of anguish."³

Attempts were also made to restrict, as far as possible, the celebration of the Roman Catholic worship. In 1715, at the time of the Jacobite insurrection in Scotland, the Duke of Shrewsbury, who was then lord-lieutenant, ordered all the

¹ For the significance of the Charter Schools, the letters of Archbishop Boulter are especially important ("Letters written by Hugh Boulter, Lord Primate of Ireland, 1724-1738." Oxford, vol. i., 1769; vol. ii., 1770). See also Wakefield's "Account of Ireland," ii. pp. 410-414; and Lecky, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 200 *et seq.*

² Comp. Boulter's letter of May 7, 1730, to the Duke of Newcastle, vol. ii. p. 11.

³ See Wakefield, *loc. cit.*

Catholic chapels in Ireland to be closed ;¹ but it was not only during periods of great excitement that such measures were adopted ; numerous regulations were passed in seasons of profound tranquility which were especially designed to suppress the services of the Catholic Church. Thus, the Catholics were only permitted to have such chapels as had neither steeples nor bells ;² pilgrimages were forbidden under severe penalties,³ and even the observance of a religious festival, not sanctioned by the state, was visited with a heavy fine.⁴ Any person who was instrumental in converting a member of the Anglican Church to Catholicism was punished with the confiscation of his property. On the other hand, those Catholic priests who went over to the English Church received an annual allowance of £20, which was subsequently raised to £30.⁵ Indeed, one of the objects chiefly aimed at was to restrict the increase of the Catholic priesthood as much as possible, and as a means of keeping an effectual check on their numbers, the law of 1703⁶ ordered that every Catholic priest, on pain of banishment, should enrol his name in a certain prescribed register ; that only such priests as were thus registered, should be entitled to celebrate mass, and those only in their own parishes. And although the Treaty of Limerick expressly stipulated that no other oath than the oath of allegiance should be demanded of the Catholics, yet, in the year 1709, every Catholic priest was required to take the oath of abjuration, which declared that neither James III. nor any other Catholic had any right whatever to the Crown of England and Ireland.⁷ Scant and niggardly as was the toleration accorded to the priesthood, not even this measure of indulgence was granted to the higher dignitaries of the Catholic Church. All bishops, deans, and heads of

¹ Comp. Lord Mahon's "History of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles" (Lond., 1853), vol. i. p. 64.

² See Beaumont, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 104.

³ Irish Statutes, 2 Anne, c. 6, §§ 26, 27.

⁴ See 7 William III., c. 14.

⁵ See 2 Anne, c. 7, § 2. The sum was raised to £30 by 8 Anne, c. 3, § 18.

⁶ 2 Anne, c. 7.

⁷ 8 Anne, c. 3, § 22.

religious orders were commanded, in 1698, in accordance with an enactment of the reign of William III., to leave the country on pain of incurring the penalty of high treason.¹ Even the harbouring or entertaining of one of these dignitaries was an act to which penalties were attached ; a law of 1709 offered a reward of £50² to any one who would reveal the retreat of a bishop or a dean ; and as the sum of £20 was likewise offered for the discovery of an unregistered priest, these premiums actually called into existence a new vocation, many men now making it their business to hunt out the priests from their hiding places, and denounce them to the authorities.

Such were the measures constituting the penal code which the ruling party in Ireland ingeniously devised against the majority of the population of the country. But if the real aim and intention of these laws was to hinder the further growth of popery,³ then the efforts put forth were not attended with success. In spite of these cruel laws, only thirty-seven persons joined the Anglican Church between 1703 and 1709 ; during the following ten years the number of converts rose to 150 ; and altogether,—an accurate record having been kept of every recovered sheep—from 1703 to 1773, 4,088 people went over to the Established Church.⁴ Many of these conversions were, however, only feigned ; at least, Archbishop Boulter complains in 1727,⁵ that many persons, in order to procure admission to the bar, brought a certificate testifying that they had partaken of the sacrament according to the rites of the Protestant Church, but that when they had attained their ends they brought up their children as Catholics, and, indeed, never troubled themselves about the English Church again.

¹ 9 William III., c. 1.

² 8 Anne, c. 3.

³ The law of 1703 is entitled, “An Act to Prevent the Growth of Popery.”

⁴ This number is the result of calculations to be found in the “Memoirs of the Life of H. Grattan, by his son,” vol. i. p. 266.

⁵ See his letter to Lord Carteret of the 26th July, 1727. Hence, he was in favour of a bill providing that converts should not be admitted to the bar until five years had elapsed from the time of their change of faith (Boulter’s “Letters,” i. p. 187; *ibid.*, p. 226.)

But even these pretended conversions do not appear to have been very numerous ; and it is certain that the great bulk of the Irish people remained true to Catholicism, even in the period of its bitterest persecution. When Wesley visited Ireland in 1747, he found that in some parts of the country there were ten, fifteen, or as many as twenty Catholics to one Protestant.¹

Nor were the results more satisfactory with regard to the numbers of the priesthood. If the compulsory registration of the priests was designed to reduce their numbers, here, too, the desired end was far from being attained ; in support of which statement we again cite Archbishop Boulter, who, in letters bearing date 1728, lays particular stress upon the fact that there were about three thousand Catholic priests in Ireland, as against six to eight hundred clergy of the Established Church.² And, although these figures appear somewhat exaggerated, the report of the Committee of the House of Lords, which, at the instance of this prelate, was appointed to inquire into the condition of popery in the country, states that there existed in Ireland at that time 1,445 priests, with 892 mass-houses, and 54 private chapels ; and that the number of monasteries amounted to 51, with 254 monks.³

But, as all the authorities of the last century unite in agreeing, these laws were, in fact, not devised for the purpose of diminishing the numbers of the Catholics ; their one aim and object was to rob the Catholics of Ireland of all influence and importance. Burke, the statesman, himself an Irishman by birth, and a Protestant, a man intimately acquainted with Irish history, as well as an eminently intelligent observer of the circumstances of Ireland, affirms that the penal laws were not dictated by any considerations of religion, but were merely the offspring of the spirit of domination.⁴ In like

¹ Wesley's "Works," vol. xv. p. 209 ; comp. also Lord Mahon's "History of England," i. p. 248.

² See Boulter's "Letters," i. pp. 210, 223.

³ Comp. Lecky, vol. ii. p. 277.

⁴ See "A Letter to a Peer of Ireland on the Penal Laws" (1782), in Burke's "Works" (ed. 1808), vol. vi. p. 295.

manner, Lord Townshend,¹ an Irish statesman, whose name will frequently recur in these pages, expressly states that the Irish legislature desired, by means of these laws, to annihilate the influence of the Papists. Young,² the celebrated political economist, also observes that these enactments were not directed against religion, which only thrives in proportion as it is persecuted, but against the property and commercial industry of all those who professed this religion. And this object was fully realized, for, under the burden of oppressive legislation, the Catholic population speedily lost all significance. The result of the enforced division of the estates, and the consequent dispersion of the property was, that, as Lord Townshend in one place remarks,³ there was scarcely a single Catholic family left in Ireland which derived any influence or position from its landed possessions. As the Catholics were almost completely debarred from obtaining a superior education, it was impossible that any leader should arise in their midst. The Papists, accordingly, degenerated into an uncultured mass, without guide or head ; they were reviled in the streets and derided on the stage ;⁴ while, according to the testimony of Lord Chesterfield, the Catholic farmer was more grossly treated by his Protestant landlord than the negro slave by his master.⁵ And in what mean estimation they were held by the Protestant ruling class may best be illustrated by the judgment passed upon them by Swift as early as the year 1708.⁶ "The popish people," he writes, "people without leader, without discipline or natural courage, are little better than hewers of wood and drawers of water,

¹ In a private letter from Townshend to Rochford, April 10, 1772, obtained by Lecky from the English Record Office, and to be found in his "History of England," vol. iv. p. 460.

² See Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), ii. p. 74.

³ See Lecky, vol. iv. p. 460.

⁴ For instance, in the comedy of "The Non-juror," which was produced in Dublin in the year 1718 (comp. Beaumont's "L'Irlande, sociale, politique, et religieuse," i. p. 131).

⁵ See Lewis "On the Irish Disturbances," p. 53 ; and Arthur Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans., ii. p. 60 *et seq.*) ; comp. also Lecky, ii. pp. 291, 292.

⁶ See Swift, "A Letter Concerning the Sacramental Tests" (Roscoe), vol. ii. p. 233.

utterly incapable of inflicting any injury, even if they desired it."

At that time secret bands of robbers, who went by the name of Tories and Rapparees, favoured by the unexampled poverty of the country, organised and carried on a kind of guerilla warfare against the dominant party. Rumours were also frequent of acts of incendiarism committed by these bands ; of cattle-maiming¹ especially between the years 1711 and 1713 ; of the abduction of wealthy Protestant maidens ;² but the thought of an open resort to arms was never, at this period, for a moment entertained by the Irish. When, in 1715, the Jacobite insurrection broke out in Scotland, Ireland remained perfectly tranquil, and a portion of the Irish army was employed in quelling the revolt of the Highlanders. Four years later, when an invasion of the Stuarts was threatened, the Duke of Bolton, then lord-lieutenant, again sent troops to England, and when in 1722, it was apprehended that the Pretender's standard was once more about to be raised, six Irish regiments were despatched to England, in reference to which incident the following interesting communication passed between King, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, and his brother of Canterbury : "We are sending off," he writes, "six regiments to assist you. One would think, considering the number of Papists we have here ; that our gentry are, for the most part, in England ; and all our money goes there ; that we should rather expect help from you in any distress, than send you forces to protect you. Yet this is the third time we have done so since his majesty's accession to the throne, and withal preserved the kingdom from any insurrection or rebellion, which is more than can be said for England or Scotland."³ Swift was, therefore, justified in declaring in the year 1725,⁴ that in Ireland the cause of the Pretender was dead.

Notwithstanding all this, the penal code still remained in

¹ Comp. Lecky, ii. p. 352.

² See Arthur Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), ii. pp. 184, 185.

³ The letter of Archbishop King to the Archbishop of Canterbury of May, 1772, is in Lecky, *loc. cit.* (vol. i. p. 282, note), and has been copied, for the most part, from a manuscript in the British Museum.

⁴ In the "Drapier's Letters" (Letter 7, Roscoe), vol. ii. pp. 1-54.

force, and not one of its provisions was repealed. Here and there, indeed, a voice was raised advocating the relaxation of these statutes.¹ Viscount Molesworth declared himself in favour of removing the restrictions relating to the education of Catholics. Canon Synge, in one of his sermons, recommended the observance of religious toleration towards Papists; the Anglican Bishop Berkeley, in a work on political economy, pointed out the preposterousness of preventing Catholics from acquiring landed property. But all these men were as those who cry in the wilderness, their voices never penetrated to the ears of the English Government; and among all Great Britain's statesmen, from 1691 until about 1740, Lord Stanhope was the only one who ever conceived the design of mitigating the rigours of the religious enactments against the Papists.² There still exists a draft containing a list of conditions upon which he was minded to introduce a measure for relaxing the penal code, but the Ministry of Stanhope was of too short duration to admit of this scheme being brought to maturity, and his successor, Robert Walpole, during his long tenure of office, effected no alteration in the existing condition of things.

It was not until after the downfall of Walpole that a change took place in the views of English statesmen, and in this respect the viceregency of Lord Chesterfield is especially worthy of notice.³ This statesman undertook the administration of Ireland just at the critical moment when the romantic Charles Stuart had landed in the Highlands, with the intention of taking possession of the throne of Great Britain for his family. A man of tolerant nature and wide culture, his feelings revolted against a policy which aimed at strengthening Protestant interests in the country by means of

¹ See Lecky, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 305 *et seq.*

² Printed in Lord Mahon's "History of England, from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles," vol. ii. p. 77, App.; comp. *ibid.*, vol. i. p. 326.

³ The truest estimate of Lord Chesterfield's administration is to be derived from his own letters, which are to be found in his "Miscellaneous Works" (Lond., 1777, vol. iii.). Consult also the biography, by Maty ("Memoirs of the Life of Lord Chesterfield"), which is prefixed to vol. i., especially pp. 152-172.

a persecution of the Catholics ; and, although in the official address with which he opened Parliament on the 8th October, 1745,¹ he was compelled to refer to the good effects of the popish laws, he, nevertheless, went to Ireland with the secret determination “to proscribe not a single individual among the Catholics, but to win them all over by good treatment.”² He repeatedly expressed the opinion that “for Ireland poverty was a far greater evil than popery.”³ In one of his letters he urges that the laws be made as mild as possible, and that then they be strictly enforced. He specially recommends⁴ that Catholics be allowed to purchase land, inasmuch as proprietorship always constitutes the strongest bond of attachment to the throne, and he also maintains that the Catholics should not be required to take any other oath than the simple oath of allegiance, as no faithful Catholic could honestly take the oath of abjuration.⁵

At that period, enlightened and tolerant views such as these were sorely needed. The English circles which Chesterfield had just left, and which looked upon Jacobitism and popery as inseparable, demanded that, in accordance with the course already pursued in England, the lord-lieutenant should close all the Catholic mass-houses and chapels in Ireland, a request which he steadfastly disregarded, and unhesitatingly continued to allow the Irish the free exercise of their religion, according to their necessities. On the contrary, he called to his aid a Catholic of high standing and position, reminded him of the influence he wielded over his fellow religionists, and powerfully appealed to him to use this influence for the maintenance of order and tranquility.⁶ This decided action of the viceroy, united with his accustomed

¹ To be seen in the “Miscellaneous Works,” vol. i. p. 268.

² Comp. Chesterfield’s letter, preserved in the archives of Dublin Castle, and printed in Mahon’s “History of England,” iii. p. 328.

³ See letter of Thomas Prior of the 14th June, 1746 (“Miscellaneous Works,” vol. ii. p. 541).

⁴ Comp. the letter to Chevenix, Bishop of Waterford, of the 22nd November, 1757 (“Miscellaneous Works,” ii. p. 495).

⁵ Letter to the same of the 29th January, 1755 (“Miscellaneous Works,” ii. p. 482). Comp. also Maty, *loc. cit.*, pp. 160, 161.

⁶ Maty, *loc. cit.*, p. 156.

and acknowledged tolerance, was productive of the best results. The Irish priests, by both written and oral exhortations, warned their flocks against taking part in any ill-advised insurrection, and enjoined upon them to be faithful to their country ; and the people responded to these admonitions of their spiritual guides by a perfect compliance with their wishes. As Lord Chesterfield, with just pride, was subsequently able to affirm, not a hand was raised throughout the entire land in favour of the rebellion, and in the Irish House of Lords, Stone, the Protestant archbishop, was forced to acknowledge that, on the papers being examined which were found on the Pretender's secretary when he was taken prisoner, not the slightest trace had been discovered of any Irishman having been concerned in, or in any way having furthered, the Pretender's cause.¹

Although Chesterfield was recalled from his post in 1746, the succeeding administration was unable, in face of the loyal bearing of the Catholic population, to adhere to the letter of the illiberal penal code. A growing sentiment of religious toleration was also at work, and, consequently, there began to be initiated a different ecclesiastical policy. The old penal statutes were not, indeed, repealed, but they were no longer rigidly enforced. The strict oversight of the priests was relaxed ; the penalties imposed on the possession of arms were not exacted ; and no obstacles were placed in the way of wealthy Catholics sending their children to be educated on the Continent.²

One result of this changed policy was that, in course of time, a number of writers sprang up among the Catholics of the country, who raised their voices in favour of the abolition of the penal statutes. One of these was the Capuchin friar O'Leary, whose brilliant literary talent is still held in high estimation by his fellow-countrymen ;³ another was Dr. Curry, a physician, who especially endeavoured to refute the mis-

¹ See Curry's "State of the Irish Catholics," ii. p. 261.

² Comp. Arthur Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), i. p. 144.

³ Comp. Lecky on "Flood" ("Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland," translated by Jalowicz, 1879), p. 127.

representations which were so widely disseminated among the populace respecting the rebellion of 1641 ; and to these may be added the antiquary O'Connor. The last two, in conjunction with a merchant named Wyse, founded, in 1757, the society known as the Catholic Association,¹ whose aim was to vindicate and maintain the interests of Catholicism. In the same year, at Dublin Castle, the Catholic gentry of Ireland presented to the Duke of Bedford, who was at that time lord-lieutenant, an address praying for the repeal of the penal statutes, while, in order to show that the Catholics were worthy of more beneficent treatment, the association published a declaration,² in which it repudiated, in the most emphatic manner, the doctrine that any ecclesiastical authority has the right to depose temporal rulers, and at the same time solemnly affirmed that the Catholics had no thought of engaging in any proceedings hostile to the institutions of the state.

Two years later the Catholics were offered the opportunity of giving practical proof of their loyalty. When, in 1759, at the time of the seven years' war, General Thurot, a French officer, arrived with several ships in Ireland and landed at Carrickfergus, not a single Irishman rose in his favour, and the invasion consequently came to an ignominious end. But no acknowledgment was made to the Catholics of their peaceful and law-abiding attitude, in the repeal or relaxation of the penal enactments ; and during a further period of twenty years, this question still remained in exactly the same stage of stagnation.

¹ Plowden's "Historical Review," i. p. 332 ; also Appendix (No. lxii. p. 264), where a copy of Wyse's programme may be seen.

² Parnell's "History of the Penal Laws," pp. 78-82 ; also Lecky's "History of England," vol. iv., p. 469.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERIOD OF IRELAND'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS, FROM THE REIGN OF WILLIAM III. TO THAT OF GEORGE III.

WE have already shown (pp. 99, 100) how, in the reign of Charles II., the commercial and agricultural classes of England, animated by motives of selfishness, inaugurated a series of enactments which debarred Ireland from all colonial trade and prohibited the export of Irish cattle and other agricultural products to England. If it was possible to enact such laws in the reign of a monarch comparatively friendly to the Irish, it is not surprising that, during the ten years which followed the Revolution of 1688 and the fresh rebellion in Ireland, the English Government suffered no legislative changes to be effected favourable to the interests of the sister isle. The Irish were, therefore, still forbidden to export cattle or other agricultural produce to England, and the prohibition against traffic with the colonies was, by a special decree¹ of William III., in the year 1696, amplified and rendered more stringent. It was thereby further enacted that no person, on pain of forfeiting both ship and cargo, should convey merchandise to Ireland from any of the American colonies, without having first landed in England, and having there paid the customary dues. A decree of this nature was an effectual bar to any direct commercial intercourse between Ireland and the American colonies. But the Irish were marked out for still more oppressive economical restrictions. We have already seen that, in the reign of Charles II., mainly owing to the exertions

¹ Irish Statutes, 7 and 8 William III., c. 22; comp. also Buckle's "History of Civilization in England" (trans. Arnold Ruge), vol. ii. p. 304.

of the viceroy, Lord Ormond, the woollen manufacture had attained considerable importance, and that when the Irish agriculturists saw themselves debarred from exporting their cattle to England, they directed their attention to the cultivation of sheep, for which the luxuriant pasture-land in which the country abounded was eminently suitable. Such an increase in the production of wool in Ireland was indirectly of inestimable advantage to the woollen-cloth manufacture. This branch of industry grew more flourishing from year to year, and Irish woollen goods were exported in large quantities to Germany and other northern states.¹ This lively export trade, however, speedily aroused the jealousy of the English manufacturers, who contrived to gain the interest and sympathy of both the English Houses of Parliament.² On the 9th June, 1698, the House of Lords presented an address to the king, setting forth the dangers likely to accrue to English manufactures from the growing prosperity of the Irish woollen industry. On the 30th June a similar address from the House of Commons requested the king to check the export of Irish wool, and to discourage the Irish woollen manufacturers; to which, on the 2nd July, King William returned an answer signifying his assent to the proposal of the petitioners. On the 27th September of the same year, accordingly, the representatives of the lord-lieutenant invited the Irish Parliament to abstain from any further encouragement of the woollen industry in Ireland, on the ground that this was the staple trade of England, and that England already supplied all the foreign markets with wool. They, at the same time, suggested that Ireland should rather direct its energies towards fostering and improving the linen and flax manufactures, to which course England would be prepared to lend its countenance and protection.

¹ See Swift, “‘The Present State of Ireland’ in a Letter from a Gentleman in Dublin to his Friend, ‘Sir R. Walpole,’ in London, where is briefly stated the Cause of all our Woes.” “Works” (Roscoe), vol. ii. p. 102.

² A full account of the measures adopted for the suppression of the Irish woollen industry is to be met with in Hutchinson’s “Commercial Restraints of Ireland” (1779); also in Arthur Young’s “Tour in Ireland” (Ger. trans.), ii. pp. 227–231, where a copy of portions of the addresses presented by the English legislature may also be seen.

And the Irish Parliament, unused to independent action, and expecting in return for its compliance some real and material support for the linen trade, itself forged the weapon which was to give the death-blow to its own flourishing manufacture. This was effected by the passing of a law by the Irish Parliament, which came into force on the 25th March, 1699, and which imposed on all exports of Irish cloth and woollen stuffs a duty of 20 per cent. on their value—a duty which was almost equivalent to a prohibition. And finally, in 1699, the English Parliament also passed an Act¹ forbidding the export of Irish woollen manufactures to any countries except England and Wales. At the time when this question was under discussion in the English Parliament, Molyneux, the learned friend of Locke, had just issued a treatise called “The Case of Ireland,” in which he endeavoured to show the ruinous tendency of the measures proposed by the English Parliament, and he, at the same time, expressed the opinion that the English legislature possessed no authority over Ireland. This opposition, emanating from Ireland itself, was immediately suppressed by the English Parliament, which on the 25th June, 1698, caused the book to be burned by the common hangman, as a scandalous libel. The author only escaped the vengeance of his enemies by his untimely death.²

The effects of this suppression of the woollen manufacture—Ireland’s most important branch of industry—were not slow in making their appearance. The brisk trade carried on with the countries of the north immediately ceased, and as, in consequence of the poverty of the country and the large number of absentee landlords, the great bulk of the manufactured goods had hitherto found their way to the export market, now, that an embargo was laid upon all trade with foreign countries, many of the factories had to be closed. After the lapse of twenty-two years from the passing of the Act, not a single loom was to be found in many villages and districts which had formerly been entirely supported by the woollen

¹ See 10 and 11 William III., c. 10.

² Comp. Macaulay’s “History of England,” vol. v. pp. 54–60; also Lecky, vol. ii. p. 415.

manufacture ; and it is a significant fact, in any case, that in the years 1700 and 1701, 20,000 to 30,000 operatives were dependent on the charity of the public.¹

Although the Irish Parliament had given its assent to the enactment which had thus taken the bread out of the hands of a vast proportion of the nation, and had rendered smuggling the most profitable business in the country, the motive by which it was actuated was, as we have already suggested, the expectation that decided tokens of favour would be shown to the linen industry in compensation for the violence done to the woollen manufacture. But herein the Irish were sadly disappointed. The English continued to carry on their own linen manufactories, and were by no means disposed to patronize Irish productions. On the contrary, the Irish were excluded from the bounties which were granted to the English on the export of all linen goods to foreign lands. Moreover, an Act of the reign of George II. placed a high duty on Irish sailcloth and prohibited the importation of striped Irish linen to the colonies.²

The Irish Parliament soon discovered, but, unfortunately, too late, that it had made a gross mistake. The ever-increasing poverty of the country revealed the fact that it had destroyed the only flourishing field of labour which existed in the land. Artificial remedies were employed with the hope of reviving this suffering branch of industry. With this object, and as a means of relieving the poor, the Irish House of Commons passed resolutions urging the Irish people to confine themselves exclusively to the use of articles of native manufacture for their clothing, and the furniture of their houses.³ But the ruined trade was not to be recovered by resolutions of this nature. All those who were honestly concerned for the welfare of Ireland began to desire an union with England, trusting

¹ See Hutchinson's "Commercial Restraints of Ireland," p. 209 ; for the effects of this enactment, comp. also Swift, "The Present State of Ireland" (Roscoe), vol. ii. p. 102.

² Comp. Arthur Young, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 233 ; and for fuller details Hutchinson, *loc. cit.*, pp. 130-150.

³ Hutchinson, *loc. cit.*, p. 210.

that, in this way, the country might be enabled to regain its lost commercial freedom. In the year 1707, therefore, on the occasion of the Scottish Union, the Irish House of Commons presented an address to Queen Anne, in which it expressed the wish that the Crown might be invested with greater strength and lustre by means of a yet more comprehensive union.¹ But although these desires of the sister isle were supported by many enlightened Englishmen—among others, by Defoe²—the English Government paid no heed to them. The English trading classes still resented every attempt to ease the burdens which pressed so heavily on Irish commerce, and even political economists like Davenant³ deemed the prohibition of the woollen manufacture to be perfectly justifiable.

Urged by the growing commercial distress which was becoming greater year by year, and by the continually increasing poverty of the country, Jonathan Swift, in the year 1720, published a pamphlet entitled “A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures,”⁴ which he scattered broadcast among the masses. In this brochure he quotes the fable of Arachne in the following words: “The goddess had heard of one, Arachne, a young virgin, very famous for spinning and weaving; they both met upon a trial of skill; and Pallas, finding herself almost equalled in her own art, stung with rage and envy, knocked her rival down and turned her into a spider, enjoining her to spin and weave for ever out of her own bowels and in a very narrow compass. I confess, that from a boy I always pitied poor Arachne, and could never heartily love the goddess on account of so cruel and unjust a sentence; which, however, is fully executed upon us by England, with further additions of rigour and severity, for the greatest part of our vitals is extracted without allowing us the liberty of spinning and weaving them.” He then calls upon Ireland to unite and revenge itself upon cruel England, urging the Irish to restrict themselves entirely to articles of home manufacture

¹ Comp. Lecky, ii. p. 416.

² In his “History of the Scotch Union.”

³ See Davenant, “Works,” ii. p. 237 *et seq.*

⁴ See Swift, “Works” (Roscoe), ii. pp. 62, 63.

for their clothing and domestic purposes, and thus exclude from Ireland all English goods, those persons who refuse to do this to be visited with universal contempt.

The temerity with which the evils of the commercial policy then being pursued were exposed, aroused throughout Ireland feelings of wonder and amazement, and among the ruling classes this pamphlet was received with a storm of indignation. The work being an anonymous publication, the lords-justices were commissioned to proceed against the printers. In a letter to the poet Pope,¹ Swift dwells at considerable length upon this trial, in which Chief Justice Whitshed, who presided, exhibited a large amount of party spirit. Nine times the jury returned a verdict of "not guilty," and nine times did the judge send them back to reconsider their decision, publicly declaring that the case before them was one in which, by means of a dangerous and seditious Jacobite publication, it was sought to sow discord between England and Ireland. But although the jury were completely exhausted by a sitting which lasted eleven hours, it was impossible to extort from them a verdict of "guilty." The whole country was exasperated by the conduct of Whitshed, and the temper of the people was such, that the Duke of Grafton, the new lord-lieutenant, considered it advisable to interpose, and he, accordingly, stopped the prosecution. No change was, however, effected in the laws, and nearly half a century passed before any endeavour was made to strike off the oppressive fetters with which Irish commerce was bound. As regards their commercial polity, therefore, the inhabitants of Ireland were entirely dependent on the will of England. But in respect to their civil rights, they were also far behind their fellow-subjects in Great Britain, inasmuch as a number of important laws affecting the liberties of the people had not been extended to Ireland. Thus, the Act of William III., which rendered the judges appointed by the king irremovable, and the Habeas Corpus Act, that great palladium of civil liberty, were both inoperative in Ireland.

¹ This letter of January 10, 1721, is to be seen in Swift's "Works," ii. p. 62.

It is true that the country possessed a Parliament of its own, but the estimation in which it was held in the land may be gathered from the writings of Swift, in which, under the title of the "Legion Club,"¹ he holds this lofty assembly up to ridicule, as being—

" Not a bow-shot from the college,
Half the globe in sense and knowledge."

And, in truth, when we look more narrowly into its composition, and consider its actions, we can easily understand the great humorist directing his sarcasm against a body to whom the interests of its own country were of the very last moment.

The House of Lords in Ireland, as in England, was composed of great landowners and bishops. The former were, perhaps, in a position to know what would have conduced to the welfare and advantage of the country, but the greater number of these temporal peers were absentees, and the result was that the fate of all questions was left to be decided by the bishops, who held the majority in their own hands ; but who, being nominated by the Crown, and for the most part transferred from England, were, consequently, unacquainted with the circumstances of the country.²

And what, let us ask, was the constitution of the House of Commons ? Since 1691 the Catholics had been deprived of the right to sit in Parliament, and since 1727 of the elective suffrage ; accordingly, five-eighths of the entire population of Ireland were absolutely unrepresented in that assembly. Moreover, since 1704, by the extension to Ireland of the Test Act, which required all candidates for parliamentary honours to take the communion according to the rites of the Anglican Church, dissenters were also excluded from the House of Commons.³

Members of the Anglican Church, therefore, were the only class who were at all represented in the Commons, and these,

¹ Swift's "Works," vol. i. p. 730 (ed. Roscoe).

² Comp. the letter of Archbishop King to the English primate in the year 1714, in Mant's "History of the Irish Church," ii. p. 285.

³ Comp. Lecky, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 404 *et seq.*

indeed, but imperfectly ; for, all the defects of the popular representativs system, as it then existed, were to be met with in Ireland in an exaggerated form. The elections to the Lower House of both England and Ireland were conducted on precisely the same principles. Members of Parliament sat for counties, towns, and boroughs ; but these last, belonging, as they did, to just that class of elective bodies which, less than any other, contributes to form an essentially representative assembly, played a far more important part in Ireland than they did in England.¹ While in England the ancient royal prerogative, which enabled the sovereign to create nomination boroughs, had, since the reign of Charles II., fallen into desuetude, in Ireland it was still exercised. James I. created forty, the remaining Stuarts thirty-six, and William III. eleven such constituencies ; and the consequence was that of 300 members, 216 were elected by these boroughs. In all the boroughs, as well as in many of the counties, the influence of the large landowners decided the elections. We learn, for instance, from a private report which the Irish Government caused to be prepared for Pitt, that, at that time, Lord Shannon held the unlimited control of sixteen, the Ponsonby family of fourteen, and the Duke of Leinster of seven seats. In the towns, too, where, comparatively, the greatest number of persons entitled to vote were to be found, the suffrage was not vested in individuals, but in corporations.

A real representation of the Irish population was thus out of the question ; consequently, if the Government desired its proposals to be accepted, it was, before all things, necessary to gain the support of the powerful landowners, who, owing to the great influence they wielded, were called in the jargon of the day, "Parliamentary Undertakers." In order to secure the favour of these undertakers, the new peers were mostly chosen from their ranks ; titles, offices, and pensions were lavished upon them ; and even direct bribery was by no means unknown. In 1769, the lord-lieutenant of the day boasted at

¹ Accurate information respecting the composition of this Parliament is to be found in Mountmorres' "History of the Irish Parliament"; comp. also "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 116.

a public table that he could buy himself a majority whenever he wished.¹ “The Parliaments of that age,” to quote the opinion of Lord Chesterfield, in 1760, “displayed a total disregard for the public well-being, a shameless amount of self-seeking, and a general corruption of morals and manners.”²

Some remedy for this universal corruption might, perhaps, have been found in shortening the duration of the parliaments, which would have afforded the constituencies more frequent opportunities of calling their parliamentary representatives to account. What, it will be asked, was the period for which an Irish Parliament was elected? While in England the duration of Parliament was formerly three, and subsequently seven years, the Irish House of Commons was elected on the accession of each new sovereign, and not dissolved until another monarch ascended the throne: thus, the Parliament of George II. sat thirty-three years, and it was not, as we shall see, until 1768, in the reign of George III., that a change took place in this respect.

The parliamentary sessions, too, of that day were held at extremely irregular periods. Since the reign of Charles II., the Crown in Ireland had been entitled to a tolerably large hereditary income,³ derived from the rents of the confiscated lands, the hearth-tax, excise duties on spirits, and custom dues: in ordinary times, therefore, it was but rarely necessary to summon the Parliament. It was not until the reign of Queen Anne, when the hereditary Crown revenue proved insufficient, in consequence of the increased expenditure rendered necessary by the augmentation of the army, and the advance of pensions, that the sovereign was compelled to convoke Parliament more frequently; thus investing this assembly with a greater importance than it had hitherto possessed.

¹ See Horace Walpole’s “Memorable Events in the Reigns of George II. and George III.” (Ger. trans., 1847), vol. iii. p. 457.

² See Chesterfield’s letter addressed to Chevenix on the 29th April, 1760, in his “Miscellaneous Works,” vol. ii. p. 507.

³ For the hereditary royal revenue, consult the “Indenture, containing a Grant of all His Majesty’s Revenue of Ireland, for the year 1676,” printed in Mountmorres’ “History of the Irish Parliament,” ii. pp. 245-409.

The Irish Parliament was, however, still completely dependent upon England. Poyning's Act (p. 8) was still in force, and, although in the year 1556, in the reign of Queen Mary, this law had been somewhat modified, and it was now possible for the Irish to convene Parliament before submitting all its proposed measures to the English Privy Council, it was, nevertheless, not competent to them to amend a bill returned by the Crown, but they were yet, as heretofore, under the necessity of either accepting or rejecting it entirely.¹ Ireland was, therefore, in a much less favourable position than Scotland, which before the Union possessed an absolutely independent Parliament.

Another disadvantage under which Ireland lay was that the English House of Lords, and not the Irish Upper House, constituted the highest court of appeal for the land. When, in 1719, the Irish House of Lords claimed for itself appellate judicial functions, the English Parliament peremptorily refused this demand, and passed an express resolution, declaring that "the kingdom of Ireland hath been, is, and of right ought to be subordinate unto and dependent on the Imperial Crown of Great Britain;" and that the king, in conjunction with the English Parliament, always had, and ought to have, the power "to enact binding laws for the people and the Kingdom of Ireland."²

Ireland's dependence upon England was clearly impressed upon the entire system of administration pursued in that country. The lord-lieutenant, the highest functionary in the land, was rarely an Irishman by birth, but was almost invariably chosen from the highest ranks of the English nobility. Frequently cherishing a strong aversion to the rude and uncivilised country over which he ruled, and but slightly acquainted with its circumstances, the viceroy customarily passed but a short portion of his time in Ireland; after a residence of a few months, he generally transferred the reins of Government to his ministers, the lords-justices, and returned to

¹ Comp. Mountmorres, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 59.

² These documents are to be found in Plowden, "Historical Review," i., App. pp. 244-249.

England, there to enjoy, at his leisure, the ample revenues attached to his office. The country thus suffered a twofold injury : for, not only was all united action in the conduct of affairs rendered impossible, but no benefit or advantage was reaped by the inhabitants of this indigent land from the very considerable salary of the highest state official. This lofty post became an absolute sinecure, and it was not without reason that at the commencement of the eighteenth century, the Duke of Shrewsbury, at that time lord-lieutenant, said of the office, "there was just occupation enough to prevent a man going to sleep, but not sufficient to keep him awake."¹ The absenteeism of the viceroys had become so habitual, that Lord Chesterfield's residence in the country during the whole term of his lord-lieutenancy was a matter of general remark ; and Chesterfield himself was not a little proud of the interest he had shown in Irish affairs, and was particularly fond of declaring, that he would rather be called the "Irish Lord-Lieutenant than the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland."²

Moreover, not only was the viceroy commonly an Englishman, but all the highest positions, in both Church and State, were, as a rule, filled by Englishmen. In the fourth of the Drapier letters,³ Swift furnishes us with a list of important and highly paid offices, all of which were in the hands of English noblemen, and were administered on the absentee principle. During the first half of the last century, the post of chancellor of the kingdom of Ireland was uninterruptedly filled by Englishmen ; the same was the case with the primacy ; and as the Irish primates were always numbered among the lords-justices, there was, consequently, a preponderance of English interests in this body. The richest livings in the Church were rarely given to the clergy of Irish birth, but, for the most part, they were conferred upon Englishmen, usually the creatures of the viceroy, who were popularly known by the name of "king-fishers." It is only necessary to glance at the letters written

¹ This saying is taken from the "Marchmont Papers," i. p. 91, and is repeated by Lord Mahon in his "History of England," vol. iii. p. 327.

² See a letter to Prior, in the year 1746 ("Miscellaneous Works," ii. p. 546).

³ See Swift, "Works" (Roscoe), vol. ii. p. 19.

to England by Archbishop Boulter during his primacy, 1724–1738,¹ to see how this illustrious representative of English interests scented out, with the sagacity of an animal of prey, all the rich Irish livings which were likely to become vacant, and how, after the event, he strained every nerve to secure the preferment of English friends and favourites. Not without justice, therefore, did Swift affirm, in 1727, that “those who have the misfortune to be born in Ireland have the least title to any considerable employment.”²

The salaries attached to the posts thus conferred upon Englishmen by the Crown were usually very considerable, and out of all harmony with the revenues of this poor and half-civilized country. The Irish viceroy of to-day derives a large, almost a princely income from his office, but when we hear that at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Lord Wharton, while occupying the post of lord-lieutenant, accumulated, within a period of two years, a fortune of £45,000, it must be admitted that in comparison with the enormous incomes derived by these functionaries in the last century, the present salary of £18,000 is insignificant.³ Other officials were correspondingly well paid. Swift tells us, for example, that the salary attached to the post of under-treasurer was £9,000, to that of clerk of the Pells £2,500, and that of first remembrancer £2,000.⁴ Full, therefore, of the bitterest truth is likewise this assertion of the great Irish humorist, that “Ireland is like a great hospital, in which all the household officers grow rich, while the poor, for whose sake it was built, are almost starving.”⁵

The Irish Parliament being unable to place any but the very flimsiest restrictions on the Crown in the bestowal of

¹ Comp. Boulter’s “Letters,” i. pp. 22, 31, 138 *et passim*.

² See “The Short View of Ireland,” in “Works” (Roscoe), ii. p. 80.

³ According to Gneist in “Das heutige Verfassungs-und Verwaltungsrecht Englands” (1857, vol. i. p. 389), the salary of the Irish viceroy is stated to be Th. 120,000 = £18,000. Concerning the accumulated savings of Lord Wharton during a period of two years, see Gordon’s “History of Ireland,” ii. p. 198; also Beaumont, “L’Irlande sociale, politique, et religieuse,” i. p. 175.

⁴ See “Works,” ii. p. 19.

⁵ See “The Short View of Ireland,” in “Works” (Roscoe), ii. p. 80.

places and pensions, the result was that Ireland's resources were very largely employed in endowing members of the royal family, or court favourites. This practice began to be adopted in the reign of Charles II.,¹ who granted an Irish pension to his natural son, the Duke of St. Albans, and enriched his favourite, the Duke of Ormond, with confiscated landed property to the value of £70,000. The mistress of James II. received an Irish pension, of £5,000 a year ; and in the reign of William III., his Dutch favourites, the Dukes of Portland and Albemarle, and the Earl of Athlone received such large presents of the forfeited lands of Ireland, that even in the English Parliament these grants excited remark, and were the occasion of some disagreeable explanations.² Under the Hanoverian kings, the same system with regard to the expenditure of the Irish revenue was maintained. In the reign of George I., pensions were granted out of Irish state funds to the Duchess of Kendal and the Countess of Darlington, mistresses of the king ; in the reign of George II., to another royal favourite, the Countess von Wallmoden ; to the widowed sister of the king, the Queen of Prussia, and to a number of Hanoverian favourites. This squandering of Irish revenues, partly on foreigners, partly on unworthy individuals, —“infamous pensions to infamous men,” as Grattan designated them in a speech made in 1779,³—naturally produced widespread dissatisfaction, the more so that these large sums were not spent in Ireland itself, but principally in England, and, consequently, the Irish tradesman and artisan were precluded from all share in the benefits to be derived from their expenditure. In the year 1729, therefore, just as the country was emerging from a severe visitation of famine, the Irish Parliament aroused itself, and took the bold step of imposing a special tax of four shillings in the pound upon all salaries and pensions paid to persons who did not reside six months of the year in Ireland.⁴ But as a clause was inserted in the

¹ For the favourites who were provided with pensions out of Irish funds, see Lecky, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 228.

² See Macaulay, vol. v. p. 264 *et seq.*

³ See “Speeches of Henry Grattan,” i. p. 23.

⁴ Irish Statutes, 3 George II., c. 2.

bill providing that the king should have the right to exempt the recipients of certain pensions from the payment of the tax, the effects of this financial measure could scarcely be detected. The great majority of the pensions continued to be spent out of the country, and owing to the fact that Parliament possessed no restraining influence, the Irish pension-list increased annually. When, in 1755, the Duke of Devonshire entered upon the office of viceroy, it amounted to £38,000; when the Duke of Bedford succeeded him, two years later, it was £51,583; and in 1761, when Halifax undertook the administration of Ireland, it amounted to £64,127.¹ This augmentation of the pension-list had taken place notwithstanding the resolution passed unanimously by the Irish House of Commons in 1757, that "the expenditure of so large a portion of the revenue of the state in pensions was imprudent, and detrimental to the interests of the Irish nation."

We thus see that, during the seventy years following the Treaty of Limerick, the complete dependence of Ireland upon England was manifest in every department of both the legislature and the administration.

¹ These figures are quoted from the statement of Lecky, iv. p. 365. The Duke of Bedford himself puts the pension-list at a somewhat lower figure ("Bedford Correspondence," ii. p. 273).

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERIOD OF THE STRUGGLES OF THE ANGLO-IRISH COLONY FOR INDEPENDENCE.—FROM THE REIGN OF WILLIAM III. TO THAT OF GEORGE III.

THE Protestant settlers who had taken possession of the confiscated lands of Ireland under Cromwell and William III. were compelled, in order to maintain their position in face of the superior numbers of the Catholic Irish natives, as well as by regard to their own interests, to cultivate intimate relations with the mother-country. And, in the contest with the Irish Catholics, as represented by the penal code, we find that, as a matter of fact, the English colony and the English Government were closely united. But the selfishness of the mother-country, displayed, as we have seen, in her commercial policy, did not spare the colony when the interests of England were concerned, kindred in race though it was ; and the commercial restrictions placed upon Ireland pressed just as heavily on the English settlers as they did on the native Irish themselves. In course of time, therefore, a certain estrangement sprang up between the English colony and the mother-country, which was aggravated by the over-bearing legislative and administrative measures adopted towards Ireland by the English Government.

As Burke has observed,¹ the English settlers in Ireland began, in course of time, to recollect that they had a country, a fatherland ; they raised their voices against the British Government, at first timidly and singly, and then boldly and with a certain unanimity, in defence of what were distinctly Irish interests. As early as the year 1692, one year after the

¹ See Burke's letter to Sir H. Langrishe in "Works" (Lond., 1808), vol. vi. p. 338.

Treaty of Limerick, a degree of hostility was manifested in the Parliament which was convoked by the viceroy, Lord Sydney, between the views of the English colony and those of the English Government. At that time the Irish Parliament was endeavouring to enlarge the sphere of its authority, and, to this end, claimed that every money bill should emanate from the Irish House of Commons.¹ The opposition on this occasion, it is true, was without result ; the lord-lieutenant immediately prorogued Parliament, and laid the question before English and Irish judges, who concurred in declaring the claim of the Irish House of Commons to be untenable.

And, as in this case, so all the attempts which were made during many succeeding years to obtain for the Irish kingdom a greater measure of independence were resolutely opposed and defeated. When Molyneux, as we have seen (p. 134), in his pamphlet, "The Case of Ireland," affirmed the principle that England had no right whatever to forbid the exportation of Irish wool, the English Parliament caused the publication to be burned by the common hangman as an infamous and seditious libel.

A fresh constitutional conflict arose in 1719 out of the Annesley case, a trial concerning the possession of an estate, in which the defeated party appealed to the Irish House of Lords as the final Court of Appeal, with the result that the sentence of the first court was revoked. This decision of the Irish Lords was, however, not recognised by the English House of Lords, which upheld the judgment of the court of the first instance ; and when the sheriff of the county, not regarding the commands of the English Upper House as possessing the force of law, refused to carry out the sentence, the English House of Lords visited him with severe penalties. The House of Commons in England likewise took the matter under its consideration, and the British Parliament, being determined to maintain its authority over the colony in Ireland, passed the resolution already cited (p. 141), which

¹ The House declared that "it was the undoubted right of the Commons of Ireland in Parliament assembled to prepare the ways and means of raising money, etc." See Plowden's "Historical Review."

asserted Ireland's legislative dependence upon England ;¹ and at the same time, it also established the English House of Lords as the final Court of Appeal for Ireland.

The conflict which broke out three years later was, however destined to stir the nation still more profoundly, and the fact that Britain's greatest humorist was prominently engaged in the struggle, lent to it an especial significance. The immediate occasion of this contest was the granting of a patent for the issue of a new coinage. Ireland possessed no mint of her own; consequently, when it was necessary to put fresh money into circulation, a special patent had to be granted; and in 1722, through the influence of the Duchess of Kendal, the favourite of George I., the right was conferred upon an English ironmaster, named Wood, to coin copper money to the amount of £108,000.² This transaction alone aroused considerable animosity among the populace, which several attendant circumstances served greatly to increase. In the first place, it was urged that the amount of copper money to be issued was out of all proportion to the entire coin currency of Ireland, which was estimated at only £400,000; ³ it was objected, too, that the first instalments of the new coinage were not uniform; and although the assertion, which was very generally made, that the receiver of these coins would suffer loss to the extent of 150 per cent. was, as Walpole proved in a letter to Lord Townshend, grossly exaggerated, it was undoubtedly true that the coinage was inferior in value to the corresponding currency in England.⁴ The main objection, however, which the Irish nation entertained to this project was that the English Government had again utterly ignored the Irish Parliament and the Irish Privy Council in the matter; and, without even consulting these bodies, had conferred this lucrative patent on an Englishman.

Both Houses of the Irish Parliament, therefore, presented

¹ Comp. note 2, p. 141.

² See especially Coxe's "Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir R. Walpole" (Lond., 1816), vol. ii. p. 167 *et seq.*, in which the most important documents are also given.

³ See Boulter's "Letters," i. p. 10.

⁴ Lord Mahon's "History of England," ii. p. 62.

an address to his majesty praying for the withdrawal of a patent so ruinous to the country. The king returned a gracious reply, and promised that, in case of any abuses having been committed, they should receive the strictest investigation. The master of the mint, who, at that time happened to be the celebrated Sir Isaac Newton, was, accordingly, commissioned to test Wood's money, and he reported that the coins he had examined were, with respect to both weight and value, strictly in accordance with the requirements of the patent. The Government, at the same time, reduced the sum of money to be coined to £40,000.¹ But all these attempts to appease the indignation of the Irish were in vain. The rumour was diligently circulated that Wood had issued only a certain number of sterling coins, and that it was these which had been submitted to the test at the Royal Mint. The excitement of the people, accordingly, grew in intensity, and the publication of several lampoons,² holding up to ridicule Wood's avarice and his relations to the Duchess of Kendal, naturally served to add fuel to the flame.

At length this movement received the support of Swift, who, as we have seen, on the question of the prohibitory law in regard to the export of woollen manufactures, had already upheld the interests of Ireland in opposition to the English Government. In the year 1724 he published, under the signature of M. B. Drapier, Dublin, those important letters³ which may be classed among the most famous literary productions of polemical politics. In the first of these letters, he describes the dangers which would accrue to his fellow-subjects through the acceptance of Wood's coinage, and calls upon them to be unanimous in their rejection of this money. The second letter treats virtually of the same subject, and points out the main significance of the case. "If the famous Mr. Hampden," he here says, "rather chose to go to prison than pay a few shillings to Charles I. without authority of Parlia-

¹ Swift, "Drapier's Letters" (Roscoe), vol. ii. p. 5.

² Examples of these are to be seen in Lord Mahon, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 63; also in Coxe, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 178.

³ See "Works" (Roscoe), ii. pp. 1-54.

ment, I will rather choose to be hanged than have all my substance taxed at seventeen shillings in the pound, at the arbitrary will and pleasure of the venerable Mr. Wood." In the third letter, starting with the question of the coinage, he proceeds to discourse on the general state of affairs in Ireland, and especially complains of the small measure of consideration which is usually paid to the Irish Parliament. "Put the case, that the two Houses of Lords and Commons of England," he writes, "and the Privy Council there should address His Majesty, to recall a patent from whence they apprehended the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom, and to make it stronger, if possible, that the whole nation, almost to a man, should thereupon discover the most dismal apprehensions, would his majesty debate half an hour what he had to do? Would any minister dare advise him against recalling such a patent? And is there the smallest difference between the two cases? Were not," he continues, "the people of Ireland born as free as those of England? How have they forfeited their freedom? Is not their Parliament as fair a representative of the people as that of England? And hath not their Privy Council as great, or a greater share in the administration of public affairs? Are they not subjects of the same king? Does not the same sun shine over them and have they not the same God for their protector? Am I a free man in England, and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the channel?" The same complaints with respect to the inconsiderate treatment which the Irish nation received from the English Government are heard in the fourth letter, which is addressed to the whole people of Ireland. He here affirms that the loyalty of the Irish people is beyond all question; "for which," he continues, "we have been rewarded with the privilege of being governed by laws to which we do not consent, a ruined trade, a House of Peers without jurisdiction, almost an incapacity for all employments, and the dread of Wood's halfpence. "It is true," he proceeds, "that those who come over hither to us from England, and some weak people among ourselves, whenever in discourse we make mention of liberty and property, shake their heads, and tell us

that Ireland is a dependent kingdom, as if they would seem by this phrase to intend that the people of Ireland are in some state of slavery or dependence different from those of England. But that is not true. It is written in no law. I, M. B. Drapier, desire to be excepted ; for I declare, next under God, I depend only on the king, my sovereign, and the laws of my own country." Then he concludes with pathos : "The remedy is wholly in your hands, and, therefore, I have digressed a little in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonably raised amongst you, and to let you see that by the laws of God, of nature, of nations, and of your own country, you are, and ought to be, as free a people as your brethren in England." In the seventh letter, which is addressed to both Houses of Parliament, he waxes still bolder. "For my own part, who am but one man of obscure condition, I do solemnly declare in the presence of Almighty God, that I will suffer the most ignominious and torturing death rather than submit to receive this accursed coin, or any other that shall be liable to these objections, until they shall be forced upon me by a law of my own country ; and if that shall ever happen, I will transport myself into some foreign land, and eat the bread of poverty among a free people."

These letters, which, as Burke justly remarks, exhibit the Dean of St. Patrick's in the most advantageous light, and do honour at once to his understanding and his heart, exercised a powerful influence. It seemed as if all political and religious differences in Ireland had suddenly disappeared. The Irish Whigs, the Jacobites, and the Papists were alike enthusiastic in their praise of the Drapier letters, and unanimous in their rejection of Wood's halfpence. Some of the most prominent of the Irish statesmen, as Viscount Middleton,¹ the chancellor, were strong opponents of the patent ; while others, as Primate Boulter, were full of apprehension² lest the excitement aroused by Wood's halfpence should

¹ For information about him consult Coxe's "Life of Sir R. Walpole," vol. ii. p. 172.

² Comp. his letter of the 19th January, 1725, to the Duke of Newcastle, in Boulter's "Letters," i. pp. 8-13.

be detrimental to English interests, and tend to strengthen Irish desires for independence. The Duke of Grafton, whom Walpole once facetiously described as “a fine weather pilot, who, as soon as the first sign of a storm appeared, was at his wit’s end,”¹ was, at that time, lord-lieutenant, but he was too weak to make himself master of the situation ; he was therefore recalled, and succeeded by Cartaret, secretary of state, a statesman of large experience and resource. Walpole, himself one of those accommodating, conciliatory natures, who seek to avoid all violent collision of political opinions, wrote to the Duke of Newcastle,² on the 1st September, 1724, that he was alarmed at the degree of excitement which prevailed, and he was afraid that it would scarcely be prudent to refuse the demands of the Irish with any show of force : at the same time, he considered that the immediate presence of the lord-lieutenant was urgently needed to appease the passions of the people. Accordingly Cartaret landed in Ireland in October, 1724, and forthwith offered a reward of £300 for the detection of the author of the Drapier’s letters ; as, however, no traitor could be found in the land, proceedings were taken against the printers, but although Chief Justice Whitshed spared no efforts to intimidate the jury, they resolutely declined to return a verdict of guilty. The storm of agitation still continued to rise, and ultimately the English Government was compelled to yield. In the speech from the throne,³ Cartaret withdrew the patent in the king’s name, and Wood was subsequently compensated for his loss.

Here, for the first time, Irish interests had triumphed over English policy, a victory, the moral effects of which were considerable. Dating from this period, there arose in the Irish Parliament a party—originally, it is true, very small, but a gradually growing party—of opposition to the great mass of politicians who were always ready to subordinate their own wishes to those of the Castle. It would, however, be a great

¹ In a letter to Townshend on the 26th October, 1723 (see Lord Mahon, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 61).

² See Coxe, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 315 *et seq.*

³ *Ibid.*, ii. p. 188 *et seq.*

mistake to suppose that this opposition was animated by lofty views or by real patriotism. By no means. The leaders of this party were, for the most part, large landed proprietors, with considerable influence in the boroughs, who, when they resisted the arbitrary action of the English ministers, had really only their own personal interests in view. Nevertheless, they resided in the country, were acquainted with the condition of its affairs ; and, as in many cases their own aims harmonized with the wishes of the people, their opposition to the ruling system was frequently of advantage to the nation. Small and unimportant as this party was at its commencement, it none the less succeeded on one occasion, in the year 1731, in defeating the Government.

A fund had been formed about this time towards the liquidation of the national debt, and it was now desired by the Government to place this fund in the hands of the Crown for a term of twenty-one years. The opposition was, however, resolved that it should be granted from session to session, and on the question being put to the vote, it was discovered that both parties had recorded the same number of votes. Suddenly, however, the sergeant-at-arms announced that another honourable member had just arrived, in riding costume and mud-bespattered boots, and that he desired to take part in the division. This member was Colonel Tottenham, who now, in his horseman's guise, having ridden sixty miles, joined the assembled House, which, according to the custom of the time, was in evening dress, and gave his vote against the Government, thus placing the victory in the hands of the opposition. This, it is true, was but a single success, for the Government, as a rule, was enabled to carry all its measures.¹

It was not until 1740 that the opposition became more influential, its first accession of strength being obtained when Dr. Boyle, for many years speaker of the House, impelled by jealousy of Dr. Stone, the recently appointed primate

¹ For this incident, see Plowden's "Historical Review," also Barrington's "Personal Sketches of his Own Times" (1827), vol. i. p. 193, in which it is stated that "Tottenham in his boots" was subsequently employed as a party toast.

and lord-justice, placed himself at the head of the new party. About this time, too, the press began to show itself hostile to the Government. Charles Lucas,¹ a Dublin apothecary, who in 1741 attacked the Government on account of its infraction of the chartered rights of corporations, subsequently became, through the medium of *Freeman's Journal*, which he founded, a vigorous opponent of the existing system of administration. The main objects aimed at by this man, and pursued by him in the press with an unfailing energy, were the abolition of scandalous pensions, and the shortening of the duration of parliaments. His resolute action became so inconvenient to the Government, that it was determined to prosecute him, the result of the proceedings being that Parliament, in 1749, proclaimed him an enemy to his country, and a Dublin grand jury ordered his speeches to be burned as libels. This prosecution,² however, invested him, in the eyes of the masses, with greater importance than he was entitled to ; and when, in 1760, after an exile of eleven years, he was at length permitted to return to Ireland, his popularity was so great that the city of Dublin immediately elected him as its parliamentary representative.

The question of the liquidation of the national debt once more became the occasion of violent conflict between the Castle party and the landed interest opposition, under the leadership of Boyle. A bill in connection with this matter, which was sent from England in 1753, was rejected by a majority of five.³ This victory caused great jubilation among the opposition, who caused the division list to be printed in red and black type, and scattered throughout the land. Over the list of names constituting the majority stood the significant words, “*Vindices libertatis*” ; over that of the minority, “*Hic niger est hunc tu Romane caveto.*” In Govern-

¹ Consult Plowden, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 304 ; also Lecky's “Henry Flood” (“Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland,” Ger. trans., p. 68).

² The folly of this act was recognised by Chesterfield, as is evidenced by a letter of his, dated the 26th October, 1749 (“Miscellaneous Works,” vol. ii. p. 554).

³ See “Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Right Hon. Henry Grattan, by his Son,” vol. i. (1839) ; App., p. 425 *et seq.*, where the division list is given.

ment circles, on the other hand, this defeat produced extreme irritation ; and in order to render the recurrence of such an event impossible in the future, the Government resorted to arbitrary measures, and Speaker Boyle, as well as the other officers of the Crown who had voted with the majority, were dismissed from their posts. Moreover, notwithstanding the rejection of the bill, which proposed to appropriate a portion of the surplus revenue to the liquidation of the national debt, the measure was ultimately carried by a royal ordinance.

This rigorous conduct of the Government had the effect of augmenting the ranks of the opposition. Lord Kildare, the son of the Duke of Leinster, addressed a memorial¹ to the king, complaining of the action of his ministers, in consequence of which the Duke of Dorset, who for some time had been lord-lieutenant, was, in 1755, recalled, and the Marquis of Hartington, afterward the Duke of Devonshire, was appointed to succeed him. The new viceroy made friendly advances to the party of the gentry, and from that time the influence of Primate Stone began to wane. Boyle and the other Crown servants were reinstated in their offices, and Boyle was subsequently created a peer under the title of the Earl of Shannon.

Although the elevation of Boyle to the peerage deprived the opposition of its leader, it, nevertheless, continued the conflict with the Castle party, and in the year 1757 carried energetic resolutions against the granting of scandalous pensions, and, more particularly, against conferring such on foreigners. Its action, however, remained only what might be termed a kind of legislative monologue, for the Government paid not the slightest regard to the declarations of the legislative body. On the contrary, a few months after the passing of these resolutions, it settled high pensions out of the Irish revenues on the Princess of Hesse-Cassel and on Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick.² The recklessness and total absence of consideration thus exhibited by the Government served

¹ The memorial is printed in Plowden, *loc. cit.*, i. App. p. 255.

² See "Bedford's Correspondence," ii. pp. 270-275, 335-338, 354; also Lecky's "History of England," vol. ii. p. 435.

but to increase the dissatisfaction already existing in the country.

It was now that the masses of the people first began to be interested in the proceedings of Parliament, and to give practical demonstration of their interest. On the 3rd December, 1759, at the time when Parliament was entertaining the question of the legislative union of England and Ireland, a formidable riot took place in Dublin. The mob broke into the Houses of Parliament, placed an old woman in the lord chancellor's seat in the House of Lords, insulted many members of Parliament, and from others exacted an oath that they would never assent to the proposed measure.¹ What a change had been effected during the last fifty years! In the year 1707, it had been possible for the Irish House of Commons, in an address to the throne, to pray for a union with England without evoking the faintest opposition in the land: now, the merest suggestion of such a step is sufficient to provoke a dangerous popular tumult—conclusive evidence that dissatisfaction with English rule was steadily on the increase, and that the teachings of Swift and Lucas on the subject of the legislative independence of Ireland had found acceptance among the masses. The prime instigators of this movement were, moreover, the Protestants; the Catholics, meanwhile, protesting their loyalty by an address to the Crown, and being in no way implicated in the disturbance.

The ancient party distinctions, accordingly, began to disappear, the change which had taken place in this respect being well characterised by Lord Bowes, the Irish lord chancellor, shortly after the death of George II. "Formerly," he said, "Protestant or Papist were the key words; they are now Court or Gentry, referring still to constitutional grievances."²

¹ See "Memoirs of H. Grattan," i. p. 72.

² This opinion is contained in a letter from Lord Bowes to Dodington, of the 2nd February, 1761, which may be found in Adolphus, "History of England, from the Accession to the Decease of George III." (1840), vol. i. pp. 592-594.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE III. (1760), TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD TOWNSHEND (1767).—THE PERIOD OF AGRARIAN DISTURBANCES.

WHEREAS the period from 1691 to 1760 was so barren of striking events that we have been able to treat it very briefly, an era commenced with the death of George II. and the accession of his grandson, George III., which, as regards the history of Ireland was, in many respects of eminent importance. Immediately after the accession of the new monarch, writs were issued, in accordance with ancient custom, for the election of a new House of Commons; an event which supplied fresh stimulus to the widely diffused craving for independence and the ever-growing discontent, to give expression to which, to use the words of a contemporary, had become “the turn and fashion of the upper sort of the people, and is caught from them downwards.”¹ Thirty-three years had elapsed since the nation had last been called upon to exercise its electoral privileges, and the new election was, on this account, invested with more than the usual interest. In this long interval an active press had come into existence, within the range of whose comment all the questions of the day were drawn. The event was, consequently, attended with great excitement, and meetings were held on every hand. As the lords-justices reported to England shortly before the elections: “People of all ranks, here, as well as in other places, are more curious and inquisitive into business than they were formerly”; and, to the regret of those in power, the practice

¹ The words of Rigby, a high officer of state in Ireland, which may be found in the “Bedford Correspondence,” ii. p. 29. Comp. Lecky, iv. p. 352.

was introduced of requiring candidates for Parliament to pledge themselves by definite promises.¹

But in presence of the limitations which were imposed on the exercise of the suffrage, and of the overwhelming influence of the borough-mongers, not even the liveliest interest displayed in the contest by the populace was able to prevent the "parliamentary undertakers" again acquiring predominance in the new House of Commons. The large landowning interest² was represented in a prominent degree among the recently elected members; and lawyers also played a conspicuous part in the new Parliament, taking their places, for the most part, on the opposition benches, among the patriots, as they were called, where, owing to their dialectical and rhetorical superiority, they obtained an importance and a significance to which, by their numbers, they were not entitled. Prominent among these was Anthony Malone, a powerful speaker, and a skilful exponent of constitutional law, who, at that time, filled the office of chancellor to the treasury. Another member of the bar in that Parliament was Henry Flood, the foremost rhetorician of the age.³

Before the new Parliament could assemble, a fresh constitutional dispute broke out between England and Ireland. We have already seen how, in 1692, the Irish House of Commons, under Lord Sydney, had made an energetic, although, it is true, an unsuccessful, demand, that money bills should be allowed to proceed from the House of Commons itself, and not from the Irish Privy Council (p. 147). If at that time, and in that stage of public feeling, a demand of this nature had been advanced, it might be supposed that now, when a much more vigorous desire for independence pervaded the country, a repetition on the part of the Government of the action which evoked it, would encounter still more violent

¹ See the representation made by the lords-justices in Lecky, iv. pp. 352, 353.

² In a letter to Dodington (*Adolphus, loc. cit.*, i. 592), Lord Bowes says that the parliamentary representatives in Ireland probably owned more property, in proportion to their number, than those in Great Britain.

³ For Flood, consult Lecky's "Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland" (trans. by Jalowicz), pp. 62-100.

opposition from the people. In view of this consideration, therefore, and on the representations of Malone, chancellor of the Irish treasury, the Irish Privy Council intimated to the authorities in England that, in its judgment, to send in a money bill as the ostensible ground for summoning the new Parliament would, under existing circumstances, be inopportune. England, however, declined to create a precedent by deviating from established usage, and refused to allow the innovation suggested by the Privy Council. Meanwhile, the strength of the opposition had been decidedly over-estimated, and when the bill was brought in, its opponents in Parliament were unable to defeat it. The Government gained an easy victory, and subsequently revenged itself on Malone for the resistance which, at his instigation, the Irish Privy Council had offered to its decrees, by dismissing him from the post of chancellor to the treasury.¹

The first session of the new Parliament passed away without any further conflicts. The recently appointed viceroy, Lord Halifax, who entered upon office on the 6th October, 1761, was remarkably popular with the Parliament, which granted him a considerable vote of credit for military expenditure,² and also raised the salary attached to the lord-lieutenancy. The Catholics likewise demonstrated their loyalty by presenting in February, 1762, through Lord Trimleston, an address; in which they offered the services of their people to the Crown, and prayed that they might be permitted to enter the army; should there, however, exist any objection to the granting of this concession, they further declared their readiness to place themselves at the disposition of the king, as Elector of Hanover.³ A motion relating to this subject was brought before the Irish House of Commons, but it was very decisively rejected by the majority,⁴ and the British Govern-

¹ For an account of this conflict, refer to Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 161 *et seq.*; also to the App. i. pp. 589-592, where letters of Lord Bowes bearing on this question may be seen.

² Comp. Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 163.

³ See Plowden's "Historical Review," i. p. 348. Comp. also Lecky's "History of England," iv. p. 364.

⁴ See Hardy's "Memoirs of J. Caulfield, Earl of Charlemont" (1810), p. 66

ment likewise hesitated to repeal the law excluding Catholics from the army. A scheme was, it is true, entertained of enrolling seven regiments of Irish Catholics for service in Portugal, but this project was ultimately abandoned.¹

The tranquility enjoyed by the country under the administration of its popular viceroy was, however, disturbed by a series of agrarian risings, which originated in the southern counties, and were provoked by the destitution of the rural population. The numerous absentee landlords of the country were, very naturally, disinclined to burden themselves with the task of drawing rents from a large number of small farmers. In order, therefore, to secure a tolerably safe income, they let their lands for long terms to middlemen, who, at great advantage to themselves, sublet them for shorter terms to cotters; and it sometimes happened, when the demand for land was great, that the middleman would even re-let his own lease to an under agent. It is evident that a system which permitted several intermediaries to stand between the landlord and the actual tiller of the soil, must, in the end, lead to the imposition of heavy burdens on the real husbandman. Not only was his rent unduly raised, but by the introduction of these numerous agents, the leases were being continually curtailed, and, indeed, many of the tenant farmers, if their rents were not punctually paid, were forthwith ejected. In cases of misfortune or bad harvests, no forbearance was shown them by the middlemen, who, for the most part, were rough and uncultivated persons. On the contrary, if the tenant happened to be without ready money, the middlemen usually paid themselves with the produce of the farm, at a price ruinous to the farmer, and thus contributed still further to impoverish him. It was not exaggeration, therefore, when Arthur Young designated the middlemen "the pest of Irish society." This system of subletting the land was, in fact, one of the main causes of the unhappy social condition of the country.²

¹ Horace Walpole's "Memorable Events in the Reigns of George II. and George III." (Ger. trans.), pt. ii. p. 62.

² The middlemen are fully discussed in Arthur Young's "Tour in Ireland," ii. p. 23 *et seq.*

There were other circumstances, however, which enhanced the poverty and destitution of the land. During the course of the eighteenth century an important change was gradually introduced with regard to the cultivation of the soil. A great diminution took place in the production of corn and potatoes, and the land was largely converted into pasture for grazing purposes.¹ One of the results of the foolish law which enacted that the profits of any farm tenanted by a Catholic should not exceed one-third of the rent, and which also compelled the Catholic farmer to give notice of any increased productiveness of his farm, in order to insure the raising of his rent (p. 120), was to be seen in the fact that, as competent contemporary observers bear witness,² many Irish farmers, instead of continuing the more profitable cultivation of the soil, now restricted themselves to grazing, the nett profits of which were not so readily estimated. Another reason for the change was that, by a decree of the House of Commons in 1735, pasture lands had been exempted from the payment of tithes. Thus, all things considered, it was decidedly more advantageous for the Irish farmer to turn grazier, a course which was, consequently, very widely adopted. Moreover, in the year 1758, the prohibition against the exportation of cattle to England was removed, and for the space of five years Irish cattle were admitted into England. This circumstance, although it did not, as was feared, result in deluging the country with Irish cattle,³ nevertheless, added in some measure to the importance of the cattle-rearing trade in Ireland, in consequence of which the graziers presently found that the existing amount of pasture land was inadequate to their needs. They, therefore, hit upon the plan of enclosing the commons, which had hitherto formed the general pasture ground of the

¹ Swift complains of the enormous increase of pasture (see "Short View of Ireland," Roscoe, vol. ii. p. 80).

² This is shown by Lord Taaffe in his "Observations on the Affairs of Ireland, from the Settlement of 1691 to the Present Time" (Dubl., 1766). Comp. Lecky, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 245.

³ Adam Smith pointed out in the fourth book of his "Wealth of Nations" (trans. by Löwenthal, 1882, vol. i. p. 470), that this result by no means followed the removal of the prohibition relating to the export of cattle.

village populations, and which were, accordingly, tacitly acknowledged to be the property of the community. Many of the small farmers also received notice to quit their holdings; and thus the social condition of the smaller tenants was aggravated in many respects. They lost the right of free pasture, numbers of them were driven from the soil, while to others were allotted wretched strips of land on which to grow a few potatoes, in consideration of which the holders were forced to work for their landlords for the miserable pittance of fivepence per day.¹

Was it surprising, therefore, that a class of people thus condemned to beggary, sunk in misery, and at the point of starvation, should, in their despair, eventually combine and declare war against the classes who were more favourably situated? The enclosure of the commons, which was carried out with much harshness, seems to have formed the immediate occasion of those agrarian outrages² which were heard of for the first time in December of the year 1761. Large numbers of men banded themselves together in the county of Limerick, and went about the country tearing down the fences with which the commons had been recently enclosed, and hence were called "Levellers"; subsequently, however, from the white shirts which they wore over their garments, and the white cockades in their hats, they were better known by the name of "Whiteboys."³ The movement grew from day to day, and in February of the year 1762 there existed five or six of these companies, each numbering some hundreds of men. Threatening letters were sent by them in all directions, and

¹ This is the rate of wage paid to agricultural labourers about the year 1770, as given by Arthur Young in his "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), vol. i. p. 587. Dobbs, in his "Essay on Trade" (1731), reckons it at four-pence a day (pt. ii. p. 47).

² Comp. especially Curry's "Civil Wars in Ireland," ii. p. 271: also an extract from a letter of the lord-lieutenant, dated the 8th April, 1762, in Lecky's "English History," iv. p. 320, obtained by him from the Record Office.

³ For an account of the agrarian disturbances of this period, consult Arthur Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), i. p. 95 *et seq.*: also Watkinson's "Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland" (Ger. trans., 1779), p. 235 *et seq.*; and more especially Lewis, "On the Irish Disturbances."

every one they met was forced to swear allegiance to their mysterious head, Queen Sieve, or Sieve Oultagh. The disturbance quickly spread through the counties of Tipperary, Cork, Waterford, and, indeed, through the whole of Munster; and while in some districts the animosity of the bands was directed against the enclosure of the commons, in others it took the form of antagonism to tithes.

It is not to be denied that the system of tithes,¹ as developed in Ireland, was obviously unreasonable, and could only lead to terrible injustice. As we have already shown (p. 110), the tithes were not a payment made to the clergy in return for their spiritual ministrations, but they were a compulsory tax upon the indigent Catholic population for the benefit of the Anglican clergy, with whom they had no dealings whatever, and who, in the majority of cases, did not live among the people whose tithes they received, nor even reside in the country itself. A still greater element of injustice was introduced when, in 1735,² the House of Commons, in pursuance of a one-sided policy, dictated by class interests, passed a decree exempting pasture lands from the payment of tithes. The result of this Act was that, while the wealthy graziers, who paid rentals for their land varying from £3,000 to £10,000, enjoyed perfect immunity from all tithes, the poor cotter, whose only possession was a potato patch, was forced to pay a tax amounting to a tenth part of its produce.

If, at least, a little humanity and forbearance had been shown in the collection of these tithes, the burden might have pressed less heavily than it did; but the higher Anglican clergy resided chiefly in England, so that they, too, were accustomed to let their tithes to an agent, and in his dealings with the people, this tithe-farmer was as terrible a vampire as the middleman. With stern and unrelenting severity he gathered

¹ For a correct estimate of the tithe system, the speeches of Grattan on the 13th March, 1787, and the 14th February, 1788, are particularly valuable (see speeches of H. Grattan, 1822, vol. ii. pp. 8, 16, 25–71). Comp. also Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 321 *et seq.*; as well as the interesting observations on this subject by Frederick von Raumer in “England in the Year 1840,” vol. i. pp. 27–39.

² See Grattan’s “Speeches,” ii. p. 9.

in the last farthing, and woe to the cottager who was unable to satisfy his demands! The poor people bound themselves by a written agreement to pay an exorbitant interest, and, as Grattan once said in a speech which was inspired by noble indignation, they literally made themselves tributary to the tithe-farmers ; "they carried his corn, his hay, and his turf for nothing, and they gave him their labour, their cars and their horses for nothing."¹

It cannot, therefore, be wondered at, that at that time the peasantry were strongly incensed against the iniquitous tithe system, or that the bands of Whiteboys vented their rage mainly upon the collectors of these taxes.

They, accordingly, issued proclamations, in which they called upon the people either to pay no tithes at all, or only such a composition as should be approved by the Whiteboys. The following is a notice issued by one of these bands : "No tithes, or beware of the consequences ! If you pay tithes, you may order your coffin ! Whether you leave the country or remain here, death certainly awaits you !" Underneath this notice was the figure of a coffin and the signature, "Captain Rock."

These proclamations not only protested against tithes and the enclosure of commons ; they also declared war against excessive rents and low wages. Another manifesto runs : "No countenance can any longer be afforded to the payment of rents, the amount of which is double what it ought to be. Those persons who pay no heed to this notice will be treated with the utmost severity." On another occasion, the command goes forth that no day-labourer shall work for less than ten shillings per week, and those who accept lower wages are strongly denounced. These notices all bore fictitious signatures ; some "Captain Rock," others "Terry's Mother," or "Terry's Alt ;" but most frequently they were signed "Captain Right."²

The penalties threatened, and likewise exacted, by the Whiteboys were various. One common punishment inflicted upon those who failed to comply with the orders of these

¹ "Speeches," ii. p. 45.

² Respecting the proclamations, see Lewis, *loc. cit.*, p. 221.

bands, or otherwise incurred their hatred, was the destruction of their property, their houses and barns being set on fire, or their cattle maimed. Very frequently, too, the Whiteboys would drag people from their beds, ride off with them some distance on horseback, cut off one of their ears, and finally bury them up to their chins in a hole filled with thorns. Murder, however, seems to have been but rarely committed by them.¹

This system of intimidation was effectual.² For a considerable period no tithes were paid ; no landowner ventured to distrain for rent, nor could any one be induced to give evidence against a Whiteboy ; and when, on a certain occasion, a member of one of these bands had been condemned to be whipped, no amount of money could procure a man to carry out the sentence—a condition of things which only tended to increase the recklessness of these desperate bodies. Among other exploits, they marched through the country in open day, and released their confederates from prison, compelled the inhabitants of the town of Lismore³ to illuminate the houses in their honour, and actually levied a tax on the farmers for the support of their cause.

In view of the recognised antipathy cherished by the British against the Celts, it was natural that, by many persons in England, religious and political motives should have been ascribed to these agrarian outrages.⁴ It was rumoured that among the hosts of the Whiteboys, French officers and a quantity of French money had been discovered ; and as the attempted invasion of Thurot (p. 131) was of recent occurrence, the entire Whiteboy movement was, in many quarters, regarded as a popish insurrection, planned by the French at the time of this invasion. That Catholics should have formed the main body of the Whiteboy bands was not surprising in a country in which Catholics composed five-sixths of the

¹ Lewis, *loc. cit.*, p. 226; Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Germ. trans.), i. p. 17.

² Comp. Lecky, iv. p. 331, note.

³ See Horace Walpole, *loc. cit.* (Ger. trans.), ii. p. 69.

⁴ That the Whiteboys had relations with the Continent is maintained by both Walpole (*loc. cit.*, ii. p. 69) and Musgrave, in his "Rebellions in Ireland" (App. p. 1).

entire population, and also reckoned among their number all the poorer classes of the community. There is abundant and conclusive proof that these disturbances were altogether owing to the miserable social condition of the people, and that they were in no way attributable to religious or political motives. Thus, the tithe-farmers, irrespective of their creed—Catholic and Protestant alike—were especially singled out for ill-treatment. Catholic priests, too, were frequently made to suffer; and in the county of Kilkenny it was the Catholics of the town of Ballyragget who first combined and successfully opposed the Whiteboys.¹ The Commission appointed by the Government to inquire into the cause of these outrages also declared in its official report that “the authors of these disturbances have consisted indiscriminately of different persuasions”;² and the viceroy, Lord Halifax, in a letter to Egremont,³ the secretary of state, reports that, notwithstanding the most careful investigations, it had been impossible to discover the slightest trace of any sort of connection with foreign lands. Arthur Young,⁴ the well-known writer on political economy, who, shortly after these outrages, took a journey through the country, and sifted the question thoroughly, likewise expressly states that the origin of the disturbances was utterly removed from all political or religious causes, and that all views to the contrary were based on the evidence of infamous slanderers.

At the beginning of this movement the Government, for a time, remained a passive onlooker, and it was this inactivity which enabled the Whiteboys to inspire the population with so much dread, and to create such an amount of terrorism in the land. After a while Parliament gradually awoke to a sense of its duty, and, in the year 1765, passed an Act⁵ which threatened with the penalty of death all men who, in bands of

¹ See Young's “Tour in Ireland” (Ger. trans.), i. p. 98.

² Lewis, *loc. cit.*, p. 13.

³ The greater portion of which may be seen in Lecky, derived by him from the Record Office (Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 336).

⁴ Arthur Young, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 95. The existence of any alliance between the Whiteboys and the Continent is also very energetically disputed by Watkinson in his “Philosophical Survey,” p. 237, and by Hardy in his “Life of Charlemont,” p. 88.

⁵ See Irish Statutes, 5 George III., c. 8

five or more, should roam about the country by night, attacking persons or destroying property ; or who should release criminals, or extort illegal oaths from their fellow-subjects. Should guilty persons not be discovered, the grand juries of the counties were empowered to exact an indemnification from the districts in which the outrages had been perpetrated.

This enactment, which, in a manner, placed the country in a state of siege, was originally designed to extend only over two years, but its effects were so beneficial that the period of its operation was prolonged ; and by this means the organization of the Whiteboys was eventually broken up. It is true that, on the occasion of bad harvests, or other economical calamities, such bands reappeared from time to time. Thus, fresh hosts of Whiteboys made their appearance at the period of the American war of independence, for whose dispersion it was necessary to enact a still more stringent measure. Closely resembling them in their character, were also "Captain Right's" bands in 1785 ; and the "Peep of Day Boys," who disturbed the land in 1795 ; while the "Moonlighters," who threw Ireland into a violent state of excitement in 1881, were, in their aims and organization, not essentially different from the Whiteboys.

Although the disturbances caused by the Whiteboys were mainly confined to Munster and a portion of Leinster, a similar but less formidable agrarian movement was, at the same time, taking place among the Protestant population of Ulster. Here, too, the occasion of the agitation was to be found in the relentless exaction of tithes, to which a fresh grievance had been added by an order compelling the inhabitants to furnish labour for the repaving and laying out of roads.

Just at that time, the grand juries had determined to construct a number of roads which, it was maintained, would less serve the interests of the community at large than those of the great landowners whom the grand juries principally represented. The cotters, exasperated by this fresh addition to their burdens, gave vent to their wrath in agrarian outrages, and during the summer of 1763, they formed them-

selves into bands, four to five hundred strong, the members of which wore oak-twigs in their hats, and, hence, were called "Oakboys." These bands compelled every clergyman who came in their way to take an oath binding himself neither to promote the construction of any new highways, nor to collect tithes from his parishioners beyond a certain specified sum. Although they created much disturbance and confusion in the country, they refrained from more serious excesses, and by enacting a more equitable Highway Act, the Government gradually succeeded in restoring tranquility.¹

The insurrection of the "Steelboys,"² or "Hearts of Steel," which, though it did not occur until 1772, will be most fittingly treated in connection with the other agrarian disturbances, bore a far more dangerous character than the last. This rising, which took place in the counties of Down and Antrim, one in which Protestants, and even dissenters, were chiefly engaged, was occasioned by the ruthless conduct of a single large landowner. The Marquis of Donegal, a wealthy absentee landlord, suddenly raised the rents on his extensive property, and in preference to renewing the leases to his former tenants, he transferred the whole of them to two rich merchants. As, however, it was the intention of these men not to sublet the lands, but to use them for grazing purposes, it became necessary to eject a large number of small tenants from their holdings; and it was from this class that these nightly bands of marauders were largely recruited, whose excesses were much more formidable than those of the Oakboys. They maimed cattle, invaded prisons, and spread such terror throughout the land that, in the northern counties, juries were afraid to convict such of the Steelboys as were brought to trial; in consequence of which the Government was compelled, with the assent of Parliament, to order a change of venue, and the proceedings were, accordingly, removed to the capital. It was also decided to despatch

¹ Comp. especially Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 94; and Watkinson, *loc. cit.*, p. 246.

² For the Steelboys, see Arthur Young (*loc. cit.*, pp. 159, 166, 198), who, nevertheless, defends Lord Donegal. Comp. also Wesley's "Journal," June, 1773; Lecky, iv. p. 349; Plowden's "Historical Review," i. p. 412.

large bodies of troops to the north, and these, in course of time, succeeded in restoring order. Many persons implicated in the insurrection were captured and executed ; and owing to the fact that Ulster was relieved of vast masses of those who composed its discontented popular element, by means of the enormous emigration¹ which shortly afterward took place, the tranquility of this province henceforth remained undisturbed.

In order to present the agrarian disturbances of Ireland in their proper sequence and relation, we have somewhat anticipated the time ; and we now return to consider the internal history of the country.

In the Parliament of 1763, which was summoned after Lord Halifax had been succeeded in the viceroyalty by the Duke of Northumberland, the old cancer-spot in the administration of Ireland—the increase of scandalous pensions—gave rise to many violent debates. It was not only that the frightful amount of the pension-list, which, since 1761, had risen from £64,127 to £70,752,² was regarded as an intolerable evil, but revelations had been made of considerable jobbery in connection with some of the items. It was, for instance, discovered that, at the close of the war between England and France, the minister, Bute, had conferred an annual pension of £1,000 out of the Irish revenues upon Count de Virri, the Sardinian ambassador, under a false name ; a discovery which produced immense excitement in the House.³ It was with difficulty that the Government succeeded in frustrating the intentions of Parliament to present a memorial on the subject to the king ; and in order to allay the storm of indignation which had been aroused, the Duke of Northumberland saw himself compelled to give an assurance to the House that, for a certain number of years, the king should grant no pensions chargeable on the Irish revenue.

There were also other constitutional abuses which Parliament endeavoured to remedy. In 1763 a futile attempt was

¹ See Arthur Young, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 158.

² See Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. pp. 365, 366.

³ Comp. Horace Walpole's "Memoirs" (Ger. trans.), ii. pp. 132, 180.

made to procure an enactment rendering the judges irremovable.¹ The shortening of the duration of parliaments was likewise, on several occasions, the subject of discussion in the House of Commons. At the time of the elections a great number of candidates had given to their constituencies distinct promises on the matter, and accordingly, in 1761, Lucas, who, in *Freeman's Journal*, had formerly strongly advocated shorter terms, brought in a bill for a seven years' parliament.² This measure was passed in Ireland, but was rejected by the English Privy Council; a result with which many of the "parliamentary undertakers" were well satisfied. In their hearts they were opposed to a proposal which threatened to diminish their influence, but, in face of the popularity of the measure, they were undesirous of appearing as its open opponents, and were, therefore, greatly delighted when the English Privy Council, by its avowed antagonism, relieved them from the unpleasant obligation of voting against the bill.

The same comedy was repeated on two occasions: in the year 1763, when the motion of Lucas was again introduced, and supported in a brilliant speech by Flood; and once more, in 1765, when the bill was carried in the Irish Parliament, but thrown out by the English Privy Council. On both occasions the "parliamentary undertakers," in order to curry favour with the people, voted for the bill, knowing perfectly well what would be its fate when it arrived in England.

Equivocal as was the conduct of many of the members of Parliament, the attitude of the lord-lieutenant on this question was not less so.³ Halifax and Northumberland were, in reality, both hostile to the bill, but as a means of rendering themselves popular, they assumed an outward complaisance towards the measure. The fact that neither the highest

¹ See "Life of H. Grattan, by his Son," i. p. 65.

² For details concerning the efforts made to pass the Septennial Bill, see Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 331; Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. pp. 367-369. Comp. also the letters of Chesterfield to Chevenix ("Miscellaneous Works," ii. 515-530), in which the former lord-lieutenant meets us as the opponent of any measure to shorten the duration of parliaments.

³ See Lecky (*loc. cit.*, iv. pp. 369, 370), who here, for the first time, avails himself of the confidential correspondence which took place between the viceroys and the English secretary of state.

functionaries of the Crown nor the most influential of the landed proprietors ventured to appear as open adversaries of the proposal, proves how great was its popularity in the country. A still stronger proof, however, of the large hold this measure had on the sympathies of the people was afforded in May, 1766, when the sheriff and upwards of six hundred of the most prominent merchants and tradesmen of Dublin presented an address to their parliamentary representatives, in which they bitterly complained that the bill for the shortening of parliaments had again been rejected in England, and, at the same time, urged upon them not to vote a money bill for longer than six months, until the English Privy Council should give its assent to a measure legalising shorter parliaments.¹

In face of such an irritated public feeling, it must have been difficult for any statesman to undertake the responsibility of advising the further postponement of this bill, the more so as the condition of things hitherto existing had conduced less to the advantage of the Crown than to that of the large land-owners. George III. was exceedingly dissatisfied with the influence wielded by the "parliamentary undertakers," and owing to the fact that the idea of a personal government, both in England and Ireland, was always uppermost in his mind, a disposition more favourable to seven years' parliaments gradually began to make itself felt in Court circles. The administration formed by the great Chatham, in the year 1766, was decidedly inclined to take this question into consideration; and when the new viceroy, Lord Townshend, entered upon office in October, 1767, his instructions authorised him to state that the English ministry now purposed to fulfil the long-cherished wish of the Irish constituencies.

¹ See Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 331.

CHAPTER X.

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF LORD TOWNSHEND'S
ADMINISTRATION (1767) TO THE ORGANIZATION OF
THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS (1778).

THE viceroyalty of Lord Townshend was fraught with important results to Ireland in many respects, but, perhaps, in none more so than in this, that now, for the first time, it began to be recognised in England, that the Irish administration could not be efficiently carried on by an absentee lord-lieutenant ; and, consequently, the viceroy was henceforth required to reside continuously in the country.¹ When the Duke of Northumberland quitted office, in 1765, there was a very prevalent desire in Government circles that the new lord-lieutenant should take up his abode in Ireland, as it was imagined that the influence of the resident landowners, from which body the lords-justices were chosen, might, by that means, be diminished ; but the realization of this wish was delayed for some time by the fact that no one was willing to incur the increased expenditure involved in a permanent official residence in the country ; and it was not until the post was conferred upon Lord Townshend, who received the appointment through the interest of his brother, Charles Townshend, secretary of state, that an Irish governor could be induced to set up an establishment in Ireland.²

The new viceroy landed in the country on the 14th October 1767 ; and the circumstance that he had determined to settle among the people he had come to govern, at once rendered him a favourite with them ; while his affable manners, his

¹ See Adolphus, i. p. 331 ; *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 371.

² A striking sketch of this man is to be found in Lecky, *loc. cit.*, vol. iv. pp. 372, 373.

social gifts, and above all, the beneficent reforms of which he gave notice, only tended to increase his popularity. He announced that unless some extraordinary occasion should arise, no more pensions were to be granted from the Irish funds, and that England would henceforth place no obstacle in the way of shortening the duration of parliaments ; he also publicly declared that a measure establishing the irremovability of the judges would receive the approval of the king.¹ The Irish House of Commons, accordingly, introduced a bill intended to regulate the appointment and tenure of the judges in exact accordance with English usage. The bill passed through the Irish Parliament without any considerable difficulty, but in England it was altered to such an extent,² that when it was returned to Ireland the Irish House of Commons determined to reject it. The British Government thus discredited its own representative, a proceeding which must assuredly have conduced to weaken his authority in the land.

When, however, the subject of shorter parliaments was earnestly dealt with, he was enabled to dispel the distrust of the people, and to regain his popularity. Not long after the arrival of Lord Townshend in Ireland, the Parliament carried this bill a second time, and presented it to the lord-lieutenant in a body. The English cabinet, in which Lord Camden especially defended Irish interests, resolved, on this occasion, to yield; and introduced but one alteration, which changed the duration of the parliaments from seven to eight years.³ This change was no manœuvre⁴ intended to effect the rejection of the bill, but was merely designed to obviate the inconvenience arising from the elections occurring simultaneously in England and Ireland. Moreover, as the Irish Parliament was usually only summoned once in two years, it was considered

¹ Comp. Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 126.

² Particulars respecting the modifications introduced may be learnt from Lecky (vol. iv. pp. 374, 375), who here cites an interesting but hitherto unpublished letter of Shelburne, the secretary of state.

³ For the Octennial Bill consult Horace Walpole, *loc. cit.* (Ger. trans.), iii. p. 87 ; Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 191 *et seq.* ; Plowden's "Historical Review" i. p. 388; Adolphus, *loc. cit.* i. p. 333, and Lecky, iv. p. 381.

⁴ This is the construction placed upon it by Plowden, *loc. cit.* i. p. 388.

to be more fitting, that instead of seven years the Irish Parliaments should extend over a period of eight years. It was also decreed that this law should come into operation at once, instead of at the expiration of seven years, as was proposed in the original draft,—an alteration which some asserted was intended to punish the “undertakers” for their previous dubious attitude.¹

The bill containing these modifications was returned from England in February, 1768, and so immaterial appeared the changes that had been introduced, in comparison with the advantages obtained, that not a voice was raised against it in Parliament; on the contrary, the three readings of the bill were taken in one day, and the House moved an address of thanks to the Crown, which was couched in the very warmest terms. The population of Dublin also made a most enthusiastic demonstration in honour of the lord-lieutenant, and when on his way to the House of Parliament, to announce the king's assent to the bill, the crowd took the horses from his carriage, and dragged him in triumph through the streets.²

Having thus granted to the electors of Ireland their dearest wish, the Government was encouraged to hope that it might now be enabled to realize, in its turn, a desire which lay very near to its heart,—the increase of the army. After the Peace of Paris, the leading statesmen of England had arrived at the conviction that an increase in the standing army of Great Britain was indispensably necessary for the protection of its wide dominions. They, therefore, desired that the Irish contingent, which, since the reign of William III., had numbered 12,000 men, should be raised to 15,000, and a message to this effect was accordingly sent to the Irish Parliament. In reply to this demand, the Irish National party advanced the opinion that if England, with all its wealth, only maintained a standing army of 17,000 men, the support of an army of 12,000 men was a burden amply sufficient for poor Ireland to bear. But notwithstanding the action of this party, the Government would have succeeded in carrying its measure for the augmen-

¹ Such is the assertion of Horace Walpole, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 87.

² Comp. also Watkinson's “Philosophical Survey” (Ger. trans.), p. 47.

tation of the army had it been supported by the influential landowners, more especially by the Earl of Shannon and Speaker Ponsonby. Not that these men were opposed to the Government proposal; on the contrary, they entered into negotiations with the lord-lieutenant, and declared their readiness to assist in carrying the bill through Parliament, on condition that certain lucrative posts were conferred upon themselves and various members of their families. As, however, Shelburne, the English secretary of state, was too honourable to agree to a bargain of this nature, these "undertakers" immediately assumed a hostile attitude towards the bill, and by using their parliamentary influence, prevented the proposed increase of the army being accomplished.¹

In May, 1768, shortly after the defeat of the Government, Parliament was dissolved, and from this time all Lord Townshend's energies were directed towards crushing the influence of the "undertakers" at the coming elections. As "the constant plan of these men of power," he says, in speaking of Lord Shannon and Ponsonby, "is to possess the government of this country, and to lower the authority of English government," this aristocratic party, "which wishes to convert the lord-lieutenant into a mere pageant of state,"² must be utterly shattered. In order to accomplish this, he considered that it would be necessary, in the first place, to win over to the side of the Government, by means of promotions, offices, pensions, and orders, all those men who possessed large electoral influence. But, although in accordance with this view, he conferred titles and dignities on various members who had supported him during the past session, he, nevertheless, failed to reap the fruits of his efforts in the elections of 1768. In the new Parliament the influence of Ponsonby and Shannon remained undiminished.

The elections were completed in the summer of 1768, but

¹ The most important source of information with regard to the army augmentation scheme is the correspondence between Shelburne and Townshend, a considerable portion of which is contained in Fitzmaurice's "Life of Shelburne."

² See Townshend's letter to Shelburne, of the 31st May, 1768 (Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 385).

the new Parliament did not meet until October, 1769, and during the first week of the session, the same question which in 1760 gave rise to a constitutional conflict between the Crown and the popular representatives, was again the cause of a similar collision. As was the case in the years 1692 and 1760, the Irish Privy Council again sent in a money bill as the ground for the summoning of a fresh Parliament. If, in opposition to the Privy Council, the House of Commons had in former years, claimed as its exclusive privilege that money bills should originate with itself and not with the Privy Council ; it was infinitely more necessary now, when, in America, the question of the right to impose duties was producing so much violent contention, to reassert and maintain this prerogative. Accordingly, the House of Commons rejected the money bill by ninety-four to seventy-one ; the opposition having been strengthened by the large landowners, who, inspired by personal rancour against Townshend, allied themselves with the patriot party. Simultaneously, a resolution was carried, which alleged, as the motive of this action, that the bill had not originated in the House of Commons. This was regarded by the English Government as an unconstitutional act, and, as in the case of Lord Sydney, in 1692, the lord-lieutenant was required to enter a protest against the proceeding. As, however, Lord Townshend was, above all things, anxious to see his budget agreed to, he went to work very warily, and exercised great caution and moderation. By primarily observing a complete reticence, he contrived to carry his budget for two years, and obtained ample votes of credit : he also passed the army increase bill, with an amendment providing that of the 15,235 men to which the forces had been augmented, 12,000 should be available for Ireland alone.

When the lord-lieutenant had thus attained his ends, he proceeded to aim the blow against the Parliament which he had long been secretly contemplating. On the 26th December, 1769, he repaired to the House of Lords, where, after summoning the members of the Lower House, he entered a solemn protest against the above resolution of the House of

Commons, as being contrary to the provisions of Poyning's Act, and therefore unconstitutional, whereupon he concluded the function by proroguing Parliament. The protest of the lord-lieutenant was duly entered in the journals of the House of Lords, but the House of Commons forbade its clerk to make any record whatever of the Government protest.¹

The action of Townshend aroused great dissatisfaction throughout the country; and while in the English Parliament his conduct was sharply criticised by Boyle Walsingham,² in Ireland, owing to the fact that both Houses of Parliament were prorogued, the opposition was mainly confined to the press. *Freeman's Journal* formed the centre of the press opposition, and it was here those political letters appeared under the signature "Pertinax and Posthumus," which proceeded from the pen of a young and nameless lawyer, subsequently known as the celebrated Henry Grattan, and in which the author, after the manner of the Junius Letters, submits the conduct of the lord-lieutenant to keen and trenchant criticism. In these columns Flood also published similar letters, of which, however, he afterward desired to deny the authorship.³ Ultimately a series of satires appeared, among which was an ironical history of the administration, entitled "Barataria," by Sir H. Langrishe, in which, under fictitious names, most of the prominent politicians of the day are caricatured, Townshend being represented under the title of Lord-Lieutenant Sancho Panza.⁴

The position of the viceroy was now a critical one. Having, by his protest, as well as by the prorogation of Parliament, offended both the aristocratic landowners and the patriot

¹ For the parliamentary conflict of the year 1769, consult "Memoirs of the Life of Grattan, by his Son," vol. i. p. 98, where Townshend's speech of the 26th December, 1769, is printed; also Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 379.

² See Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 380.

³ See Lecky, "Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), p. 73. For Flood's share in the publications, see Grattan's letter to Broome of the 22nd February, 1770 ("Memoirs of Life of Grattan," i. pp. 157, 205).

⁴ The "Barataria" of Sir H. Langrishe, with the key, is printed in "Memoirs of the Life of Grattan," i. p. 435, App.

party under the leadership of Flood, he hesitated to follow up the prorogation by a dissolution, fearing lest in the new Parliament a hostile element might prevail whose first act would be, in pursuance of a suggestion contained in one of Grattan's letters,¹ to present an address to the king praying for the recall of his viceroy Townshend. He, therefore, decided that the most practical course would be to make terms with the present House of Commons ; nevertheless, he delayed to summon Parliament from one three months to another, until the consequence was that during a period of fourteen months the Irish legislature held no session. Meanwhile, however, he was using every effort to procure himself a majority. In order to discourage further opposition, he deprived his most violent opponents during the last session, Lord Shannon and Ponsonby, of their offices ; struck the name of the Duke of Leinster, one of the most influential of the landowners, off the list of the Privy Council ; and, in fact, completely reconstituted that body.² On the other hand, adherents of the Government were extravagantly rewarded. Several men of influence were won over by promotions, while various members of Parliament who had promised their support to the Government received lucrative posts or pensions. On the whole, it is estimated that a sum of about £500,000³ was spent in bribery and corruption at a time when, owing to the agrarian disturbances in the north, and to a diminution in the exports, the revenue of the country had very considerably declined.

By means of this extensive corruption, Townshend attained his object ; and when, in February, 1771, Parliament reassembled, the lord-lieutenant's majority was secure. Townshend's speech at the opening of Parliament literally overflowed with references to the public welfare and the happiness of the people ; and it was decided to reply to it by an address, the framing of which gave rise to prolonged debates in both

¹ See Grattan's letter of the 30th March, 1770 ("Life of Grattan," i. p. 162).

² Comp. Lecky's "History of England," iv. p. 395.

³ This amount is given by Plowden, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 251 ; comp. also Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 380.

Houses. Those paragraphs in the address in which Parliament expressed its thanks to the king for having been pleased to continue the lord-lieutenant in his lofty position called forth numerous manifestations of dissent ; but notwithstanding this opposition, which in the Upper House was led by Lord Charlemont, and in the Lower House by Flood, the majority voted in favour of the original draft. Nevertheless, sixteen members of the House of Lords solemnly protested against the address, while Ponsonby resigned his position as speaker of the House of Commons, rather than be accessory to its presentation.¹

Townshend's majority could, however, only be maintained by means of the same corruption which had procured it. The expenditure of money was unremitting ; fresh promotions and new pensions were promised on every hand ; and the lord-lieutenant regarded the appointment to every vacant post in church and state only in the light of a possible addition to his parliamentary influence.² With this end in view, he determined to increase the number of the commissioners forming the Board of Accounts, intending to confer these highly remunerative posts on members of Parliament, who would thus be converted into supporters.³ The House of Commons, however, on the motion of Flood, declared itself opposed to such an increase ; but notwithstanding this decided expression of opinion on the part of the legislature, Townshend created five of these lucrative offices. This action aroused a passionate storm of resentment, the issue of which was that a vote of censure against that person who had advised the king to take such a step was moved in Parliament, and after excited debates was carried by the casting vote of the speaker.⁴

This opposition appeared to deprive the lord-lieutenant of

¹ For the session of 1771, consult Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 150; also Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 11-16, who on such points is particularly painstaking.

² With respect to the extensive employment of church patronage, see Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 397.

³ See Horace Walpole's "Last Journal," i. p. 17.

⁴ For the proceedings in Parliament, consult especially Grattan's letter to Day, of the 27th February, 1772, in "Memoirs of the Life of Grattan," i. p. 257.

his reason. He held up the members of the opposition to ridicule at a public table, and satirised them in verses which he scattered broadcast through the land.¹ Almost all his letters to the English Government contained demands for fresh pensions and promotions ; consequently, during his administration the pension list swelled with amazing rapidity. In his private life, too, he gradually cast off all restraint, and at last it seemed as if it were his aim and intention, by his public conduct and his unbridled license, utterly to eradicate every trace of his former popularity.

When the consequences of this mis-government began to be manifest,—when the annual deficit continued to grow larger, and the Government script was no longer negotiable,—the English ministry felt itself called upon to take action, and on the 9th October, 1772, Lord Townshend was recalled, and Lord Harcourt, who had previously been ambassador at the French Court, was appointed to succeed him.

The difficulties which Lord Harcourt encountered on entering office were not owing to individuals ; for the leaders of both the aristocratic party and the popular party accorded him a friendly reception, and his levees were attended alike by Flood, Shannon, and Ponsonby. His difficulties lay rather in the frightful condition of the finances, which had been produced by the social circumstances of the country, and aggravated by the irrational administration of Townshend. The state of affairs was such that in April, 1773, the viceroy wrote to the English prime minister, Lord North : “Our distresses have increased to such a degree that almost an entire stop is put to all payments whatsoever, except for the sustenance of the army, and at times it has been found difficult to find money even for this purpose. I have every reason to think that the arrears upon the establishment by Christmas next will not fall short of £300,000.”²

In order to meet this calamitous state of things, it was, in the first place, necessary to discover fresh sources of revenue.

¹ See Horace Walpole’s “Memoirs” (Ger. trans.), part iii. p. 457. For the general condition of the state, comp. Adolphus, ii. p. 16.

² See Lecky’s “History of England,” vol. iv. p. 403.

Of all the plans which were now suggested with this object, none was so popular with the Irish as the proposal for an absentee tax ; a suggestion which also had the approval of Adam Smith and Prior.¹ Nor was it surprising that a country which regularly saw a third portion of its rents flow off into a neighbouring kingdom, should, at last, conceive the idea of drawing an advantage even from the money thus diverted into other lands. Harcourt, therefore, determined to recommend this tax to the English Cabinet ; and the English Tory Government appeared to be not unfavourable to the scheme. "If the Irish Parliament," wrote Lord North, "should send over to England such a plan as should appear to be well calculated to give effectual relief to Ireland in her present distress, their opinion would be that it ought to be carried into execution, although a tax upon absentees should be a part of it."² While, therefore, the Government and the Tory party were not hostile to the proposed tax, the Whigs were completely divided on the question. The illustrious Lord Chatham did not consider himself called upon to interfere with the Irish Commons in the exercise of their exclusive right to raise taxes in any way which appeared to them most advantageous. He also regarded it as a very rational Irish policy to urge, that the rents which the landowners derived from that kingdom should be consumed at home, among their own tenants, rather than in England and in foreign countries.³ Very different were the views held upon this subject by Lord Rockingham, whose property was in Ireland, and who, therefore, had a personal interest in the question. He, and four other noblemen having extensive Irish possessions, addressed a remonstrance⁴ to Lord North, in which they represented themselves as unfavourable to the proposed tax. Although, as they here state, their property was situated in Ireland, they had, nevertheless, chosen to reside in England, to which coun-

¹ Prior in his "List of the Irish Absentees," and Adam Smith in the "Wealth of Nations," bk. v., chap. ii.

² See Lord North's letter to the Duke of Devonshire, in Plowden's "Historical Review," i. p. 424.

³ Chatham's "Correspondence," iv. pp. 296-308.

⁴ The protest is printed in Albemarle's "Life of Rockingham," ii. p. 227.

try they were attached by ties of birth, and also, in a measure, by those of public duties, and they had not hitherto known that in doing this they had been guilty of a punishable offence, the penalty for which was the payment of a considerable tax. Surely, as subjects of his majesty, they had the right to choose their own place of abode ; and it could be no matter for reproach, that they had elected to take up their residence in the most important section of the realm. This tax might be detrimental to England, but it was a mistake to suppose that Ireland would reap any benefit from it ; for the necessary consequence of such a measure would be the depreciation of Irish rents, inasmuch as the imposition of this tax would subject Irish landed property to "restrictions unknown in any other part of the British dominions, and, indeed, of the civilized world." This expostulation was from the pen of Edmund Burke, one of England's most distinguished politicians, who, although an Irishman by birth, separated himself on this subject from his fellow-countrymen, and had already, in a spirited letter to Charles Bingham, severely condemned a measure which threatened the liberty of the subject, as regarded the right to take up his residence in any part of the kingdom he might think fit.¹

Just at this time Chatham was lying on a sick bed, and was thus debarred from obtaining support for his opinion in favour of the absentee tax. Burke and the Rockingham party, meanwhile, succeeded in organizing a formidable agitation against the bill, and soon induced all the landowners who were interested in the question, of whom there was a goodly number, to espouse their views. The English Government, consequently, began to regard the situation as critical, and accordingly, Rochford, secretary of state, ultimately wrote to the lord-lieutenant, informing him that serious difficulties had presented themselves in connection with the bill.² On

¹ Printed in Burke's "Works" (1812), ix. p. 134-147. For Burke's complicity in it, see Prior's "Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Honourable Edmund Burke" (Lond., 1839), pp. 147-150 : also Macknight's "History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke" (1858, Lond.), vol. ii. pp. 34-37.

² For the transactions between Harcourt and Rochford, see Lecky, *loc. cit.*, vol. iv. pp. 410, 411.

receiving this intimation, Harcourt came to the conclusion, that as the proposed tax would be prejudicial to the property of some of England's foremost men, and appeared to endanger the security of the English administration, it must, therefore, be abandoned. For the present, however, the Irish Court did not venture to display any open hostility to the measure, but rather chose to preserve the same kind of doubtful and ambiguous attitude which had formerly been adopted with regard to the Septennial Act. When Flood introduced a bill in the Irish Parliament,¹ proposing to levy a tax of two shillings in the pound on the net incomes of those landowners who, during six months of the year, did not reside in Ireland, the immediate supporters of the measure were left quite in the dark as to the sentiments of the Government. In the meantime, however, the letter of the five peers representing the decline of rents as the inevitable consequence of the passing of such a law was being privately disseminated among the public; while, at the same time, the report was put into circulation that this tax was but the precursor of a general land-tax; and by this means there was being secretly created a widespread disposition unfavourable to the bill. When, therefore, in November, 1773, the bill was brought up for discussion in the House of Commons, it was found that public opinion had undergone a complete change. Although Flood advocated the measure with remarkable energy, it was received with violent opposition, and after Blaquiere, the Irish secretary, in an extremely diplomatic speech, had hinted that the Government would not be displeased by the rejection of the bill, it was thrown out by 122 votes to 102. Thus was frustrated the scheme which was designed to heal, by means of a measure of financial policy, the moral canker of absenteeism which was eating away Ireland's life.

On this question, therefore, England carried her point; and a further feeble attempt made by Parliament, in 1774, to

¹ Hardy relates in his "Life of Charlemont" (p. 170), that Flood brought in this bill. For further particulars respecting the proceedings in Parliament, see *ibid.*; also "Memoirs of H. Grattan," i. p. 264; and Lecky, iv. pp. 412, 413.

mitigate the severities of the penal code, by granting to Catholics the right to place their money out on mortgage, was likewise defeated by England.¹ Nevertheless, the same year witnessed Ireland's success in obtaining some slight mercantile concessions from the English Government. Thus, the fisheries of Newfoundland, from which the Irish had hitherto been excluded, were now thrown open to the fishermen of Ireland; the ancient prohibition with respect to the export of woollen manufactures was modified, to the extent that Ireland was permitted to export such woollen goods as were necessary for the clothing of Irish troops stationed in foreign lands; the importation of rape seed into Great Britain was also allowed; and in order to assist the suffering linen industry in the north, the English Government granted a small bounty on the importation of flax into Ireland.² But of what value to the Irish were these paltry concessions so long as the woollen export and the colonial trade still remained under an interdict?

While the English Government was thus persistently stepping in to defeat every endeavour by which it was sought to advance the liberties or promote the economical development of Ireland, in America, after a long contest between the colony and the mother-country, the die had, at last, been cast. The restrictions which had been imposed on American commerce, and the taxation which, without their consent, the mother-country had levied on the colonists, had aroused their resentment and, finally, forced them to take up arms. Who among the Irish patriots could fail to be struck with the resemblance between the circumstances of America and those of Ireland?

The same injury which, by custom-house restraints and prohibitory laws, England had been inflicting on the trade and manufactures of the American colonies, she was now inflicting upon Ireland,—except perhaps to a greater degree; and the right which the Imperial Parliament at Westminster claimed to legislate for America, it also claimed with regard to Ireland; and if, in its dealings with the Americans,

¹ See "Memoirs of H. Grattan," i. p. 265.

² See Macpherson's "Annals of Commerce," iii. p. 576.

English Government adhered so pertinaciously to its right to impose duties, who could guarantee that the Parliament in London should not, one day, lay claim to the same right over the Irish? It is manifest, therefore, that their interests were identical. Moreover, in former years of distress in Ireland, and more especially after the insurrection of the Steelboys in more recent times, vast numbers of the Irish had emigrated to America, in consequence of which the relations between the American colonists and Ireland were many and close. Hence a large proportion of the people of Ireland looked upon the cause of the Americans as their own, and some of them were disposed to regard the events which were happening in the colonies as an incentive to action on their own part. In the year 1771, Benjamin Franklin, who at that time was visiting Dublin, where he came into contact with most of the parliamentary leaders of the day, wrote, that he had found among the most prominent men in Ireland a considerable inclination to become the friends of America; and that he had encouraged this feeling wherever he had met with it, because, by mutually prosecuting their common interests, they would be enabled to obtain from England more equitable treatment for Ireland, as well as for the colonies.¹ Accordingly, in view of the favourable disposition existing in Ireland towards the colonists, the American Congress, in 1775, issued an address to the Irish nation.² This address, in the first place, dwelt upon the identity of interests shared by the two nations in their relations to a Government from whose counsellors the old spirit of wisdom had departed. The Congress then expressed its regret that, in consequence of the war, it was under the necessity of relinquishing its commercial intercourse with Ireland, from whose Parliament America had suffered no injustice, and whose people were friends to the rights of humanity. In conclusion, the address pointed out, in emphatic terms, that the fruitful plains of America offered to the Irish a safe asylum from poverty and oppression.

But though the cause of the colonists was warmly espoused

¹ Franklin's "Works," vii. pp. 557, 558.

² Comp. Adolphus, ii. pp. 255, 256.

by the Irish populace, the American party was but feebly represented in Parliament itself; for Harcourt had contrived, by his amiable disposition, and a skilful employment of his personal interest, to completely disarm the old opposition; and even Flood, who for many years had been a leader of the patriot party, was induced, in the autumn of 1775, after long negotiations, to accept the lucrative post of vice-treasurer, a step for which he was sorely blamed by his friends, and particularly by Lord Charlemont.¹ When, therefore, on the 10th October, 1775, Parliament was opened by the lord-lieutenant, with a speech in which reference was made to the rebellious conduct of the Americans, and the assistance of Ireland invoked for the suppression of the revolt, the House unanimously agreed to reply to the speech by an address, in which Parliament expressed its indignation at the rebellion in America, and, at the same time, protested its own inviolable attachment to the Government of his majesty. The opposition limited themselves to recommending conciliatory measures, and to amendments intended to weaken the force of the offensive expressions used with reference to the Americans; but their motions were rejected, and although Burgh uttered the prophecy that Ireland would not be subdued until America should be upon her knees before England, the address was carried by close upon two-thirds of the entire votes.²

This triumph for the Government was shortly afterward followed by another. On the 25th November, 1775, Lord Harcourt requested Parliament to sanction the withdrawal, for service in America,³ of 4,000 men belonging to the troops which the law had provided should be retained in Ireland for the protection of the country. The small group composing the patriotic party, with Burgh and Yelverton at their head, desirous to prevent Ireland becoming involved in the American war, objected to the motion; but Flood himself supported the

¹ See "Life of Charlemont," p. 182.

² For the debate on the address in the year 1775, comp. "Memoirs of H. Grattan," i. p. 267 *et seq.*; also Adolphus (ed. 1810), vol. ii. p. 290.

³ On this question, see especially "Memoirs of H. Grattan," i. p. 208, 271; also Adolphus, ii. p. 290.

Government proposal in a speech in which he described the troops as "armed negotiators,"—an expression afterward bitterly stigmatized by Grattan,¹—and ultimately the Government succeeded in obtaining the assent of Parliament to the proposed step.

Great irritation was produced by this result, especially in the north of Ireland, where sympathy with the Americans was most prevalent; and the exasperation at length became so intense, that Harcourt did not hesitate to characterize the Presbyterians of the north as utter rebels.² In other respects, too, the policy of the Government offered abundant ground for attack: the constantly increasing national debt; the granting of fresh pensions, in spite of all engagements to the contrary; the rejection of the militia bill, which the country urgently demanded; the fact that the bill relating to the tenure of office by the judges had once more been thrown out in England;³ and that money bills had again been proposed by the Irish Privy Council,—were all grievances which the opposition utilized to the utmost. The temper of the country was thus becoming, month by month, increasingly ominous; and it was, therefore, a hazardous step on the part of the Government, when in March, 1776, it dissolved Parliament before the expiration of its legal term.

And undoubtedly the new elections were the occasion of endless trouble to the Court party. Again, as during Townshend's administration, pensions, places, and other forms of reward were considered to be the only methods by which the requisite number of adherents could be obtained for the Government. The Irish secretary, accordingly, forwarded to the English minister, Robinson, an accurate list of all the pensions, amounting to £11,000 a year, which were absolutely necessary to secure the elections; adding, that only in case these were granted would the Government have a decided

¹ In the speech of the 28th October, 1783 (Grattan's "Speeches," i. p. 176 *et seq.*).

² See his letter to Rochford on the 16th August, 1775 (Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 439).

³ Consult Plowden's "Historical Review," i. pp. 437-441; Adolphus, ii. pp. 290, 291; Lecky, iv. p. 439.

majority.¹ In order to insure success also in the Upper House, a remarkably large batch of peers was created, who in their turn pledged themselves to support the administration, a mode of procedure which since the reign of Queen Anne had fallen into disuse.²

Shortly after these events Harcourt vacated the post of viceroy, and was succeeded by John Hobart, Earl of Buckinghamshire.³ Notwithstanding the fact, that on his accession to office, Harcourt had expressly engaged to reduce the expenditure, the financial condition of the country was far worse at the close of his administration than it was at the beginning.⁴ When he relinquished his post as lord-lieutenant, the national debt had reached close upon a million sterling, the expenditure had increased by £80,000, while the gross annual expenditure amounted to £2,173,700, against a revenue of £1,900,000. In order to cover this annual deficit recourse was had, first, to taxation, then to loans ; but this ebb in the public treasury was not, and, indeed, could not be stopped as long as the country was entirely cut off, by political circumstances, from all its natural resources. Thus, in consequence of the American war, Ireland was shut out from the principal market for its linen manufactures, owing to which this branch of industry declined to such an extent that, whereas in 1771 Belfast contained 300 looms, three or four years later only 180 were to be found in the town.⁵ In the same way the export trade in corn and cattle was almost entirely ruined by a prohibition which the Government had issued, without consulting Parliament, on the 25th October, 1776. Ostensibly this was done to prevent the Americans procuring supplies of Irish provisions,

¹ For the correspondence between Blaquiere and Robinson, see Lecky, *loc. cit.*, vol. iv. pp. 440, 441.

² See Plowden's "Historical Review," i. p. 445.

³ The character of this man is portrayed by Hardy in his "Life of Charlemont," p. 187.

⁴ The desperate condition of the Irish finances at the close of Harcourt's administration is especially dwelt upon by Grattan in a speech on the 2nd February, 1778 ; indeed, for the history of Ireland from this time Grattan's speeches may be reckoned among the most important sources of information we possess (Grattan's "Speeches," 1822, vol. i. pp. 2-9).

⁵ See Young's "Tour in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), i. p. 187.

but it was maintained by the opposition that this embargo owed its origin merely to the importunities of English purveyors.¹

Hence, when the new Parliament assembled, in 1777, the national party made the embargo the object of its first attack, and a resolution was moved which pointed out in strong terms the illegality of the measure. While Flood defended the action of the Government, designating it an exercise of the royal prerogative, Daly and Henry Grattan, the latter of whom, on this occasion, earned his first parliamentary laurels, spoke from the benches of the opposition. The motion was, however, lost, the new Parliament, owing to Harcourt's influence, being as devoted to the Government as the former one had been.

Although, in this matter, the representatives of the people had again yielded obedience to the Government, it must by degrees have become evident to the least discriminating that it was not advisable to proceed further in the course which was now being pursued. The embargo laid upon trade, and the decline of exports had reduced large numbers of the population to the direst poverty, in consequence of which the streets of the capital were daily thronged with multitudes of half-starved workpeople.²

The events which were taking place at the seat of war were also calculated to open the eyes of English ministers. After the capitulation of Saratoga, on the 17th October, 1777, and the friendly alliance which on the 6th February, 1778, was concluded between France and the American colonies, there existed but little probability that the issue of the struggle would be favourable to England. In view, therefore, of the imminent danger of losing the American colony, was it wise in dealing with Ireland to adhere to the same fiscal and commercial policy which had driven America into rebellion, and

¹ Concerning the embargo, and the debates arising from it in the Irish Parliament, see "Memoirs of H. Grattan," vol. i. p. 283 *et seq.*, p. 336; also Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 188.

² A vivid picture of the distress which prevailed at that time is furnished by Caldwell in his "Inquiry into the Restrictions on the Trade of Ireland" (Dub., 1779), p. 26 *et seq.*

thus cause the defection of this other integral portion of the empire? But it is not to be forgotten that other circumstances had also been at work preparatory to the change which was now being wrought in England's commercial policy. A number of eminent men of letters had recently come forward as advocates of free commerce for Ireland, and by their writings—among which we would especially mention Adam Smith's memorable work, "Wealth of Nations"—had exercised a powerful influence on the minds of several English statesmen. Moreover, great as was the misery which absenteeism had hitherto entailed upon Ireland, at this precise period it produced, at least, one good result; inasmuch as it was the medium by which the economic crisis through which Ireland was now passing was also acutely felt in the mother-country; and it became a matter of concern, not only with the absentees, but also with the numerous export merchants who traded largely with Ireland, that a speedy end should be put to the existing calamitous condition of affairs, and that the national bankruptcy which now threatened should be averted.

It was, therefore, quite natural that the distress in Ireland should come under the notice of the English Parliament, and that, at the same time, it should be pointed out that the only possible remedy for the evil was to be found in the abolition of the unnatural restrictions which had been placed on the commerce of the country. The subject was introduced in the English House of Commons on the 6th April, 1778, by Lord Nugent, an Irishman by birth, who exhibited in a strong light England's mercantile policy towards his country, and laid before the House various proposals designed for the relief of its trade. He demanded, in the first place, that the Irish be allowed to export, in their own ships, all native manufactures, with the exception of woollen goods, direct to the British colonies, and that the same right be granted to colonial lands, to send all their products, excepting indigo and tobacco, to Ireland; provisions which were equivalent to a revocation of the Navigation Act of 1663, and the fatal law of William III. passed in 1696. It was further proposed to permit the export of glass to foreign countries, which had hitherto been prohi-

bited, as well as the importation into England of Irish woollen yarns and Irish sailcloth.¹

These were but a few commercial alleviations which Lord Nugent suggested on behalf of his native land, and they constituted nothing like an attempt to place Ireland on the same commercial footing as England ; notwithstanding which, however, these propositions encountered widespread opposition among the English people. The population of the manufacturing towns manifested the strongest hostility to these measures ; and they literally overwhelmed the House of Commons with petitions praying for their rejection. The operatives engaged in the manufacture of sailcloth in Somersetshire, who imagined that by allowing the free import of Irish sailcloth into England their business would suffer, were the first movers in the matter,² and their example was quickly followed by several English towns, Liverpool and Bristol being among the number.

The latter town, indeed, sent a communication to Burke, its parliamentary representative, summoning him to appear before his constituents to justify the position he was taking on this question ; but Burke wisely declined the invitation, and addressed, instead, that well-known letter to the Bristol electors, in which, in the most dignified manner, he defended his views with regard to the liberation of Irish commerce, and declared that justice now, and always had, demanded the abolition of these commercial restraints.³

This counter movement, artificially excited by the trade jealousy of the English industrial classes, was destined to achieve its purpose. Lord North, the English prime minister, who had been won over⁴ to espouse the cause of an untram-

¹ For these proposals see "Parliamentary History," xix. pp. 1100-1126 ; Adolphus, "History of England from the Accession of George III. to the Peace of Versailles," vol. iii. p. 62 ; also Macknight's "History of the Life of Burke," vol. ii. p. 230 *et seq.*

² See Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 63.

³ This communication to his constituents is contained in his "Works," under the title of "Two Letters to Gentlemen in the City of Bristol on the Bills depending in Parliament relative to the Trade of Ireland," vol. iii. pp. 209-228 (Lond., 1815).

⁴ Buckinghamshire's letter to Lord North of the 20th March, 1778, in which he lays great stress on the necessity for liberating Irish commerce, is to be met with in the "Memoirs of the Life of Grattan," i. p. 298.

merred commerce for Ireland by the letters of the lord-lieutenant, was so intimidated by the outcry which was raised in the English manufacturing towns, that he, in a great measure, sacrificed the just claims of the Irish people to the selfishness of class interest. When the subject again came on for discussion, on the 6th May, 1778, it was evident that public sentiment had undergone a great change with respect to this question, and one not favourable to the Irish. Burke, it is true, again defended the bill as being dictated by a policy of wisdom and righteousness, and declared that should this action of his cost him his seat in Parliament, the world should still know that there was one man, at least, who was bold enough to oppose the wishes of his constituents when he was convinced that those wishes were unjust.¹

The majority of the parliamentary representatives, however, allowed themselves to be seduced by the voice of selfish interests, and weakly yielded to the popular clamour; consequently, the results attained were but a tithe of those which had been aimed at. Irish woollen yarn was, indeed, allowed unlimited access into England free of duty; and as regarded the bounty offered to the fisheries, Irish ships were placed on an equality with those of England; but direct commercial intercourse between Ireland and the colonies, as far as it extended to the export and import of woollen and cotton goods, hats, glass, gunpowder, and wool, was, as heretofore, prohibited.²

Although, as was natural, these trifling concessions appeared to the Irish to be wholly insufficient, and were regarded by them merely as the product of a feeble compromise, they nevertheless have a significance in connection with the collective development of Irish affairs, inasmuch as they indicate the first public avowal on the part of the ruling classes in England, that the course of action hitherto pursued with respect to Ireland was no longer practicable.

But the year 1778 marks also an important chapter in another department of Irish history. It was during this year that the first successful attack was made upon the penal

¹ Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, vol. iii. p. 64.

² Stat., 18 George III., c. 55, 56.

statutes in force against the Catholics, and that the first decisive breach was effected in that bulwark of intolerance.

The foreign relations of the country had a considerable influence in bringing about this act of domestic policy. Of the two great Catholic powers of Europe, France had already concluded an alliance with the revolted Americans, while Spain was still engaged in negotiations with the enemies of England ; and it was greatly to be feared that the Irish Catholics, who, notwithstanding their oppressed condition, had always defended the rights of the British Crown, should their sufferings not be assuaged, might, at length, be driven to make common cause with the colonies. On the other hand, the fable concerning the love of supremacy inherent in Catholicism, and the peril with which it was fraught to the state, a fable which had formerly been assigned as supplying the chief motive for the suppression of the papists, no longer found credence in the cultivated Protestant circles of England. Indeed, was it not the Puritan colonists of North America who had just taken up arms against England, while the Catholics of Canada remained steadfast in their allegiance to the Crown ? Such considerations as these had their due weight with the Protestant statesmen of England, and, accordingly, a disposition was felt to mitigate some, at least, of the worst hardships inflicted by the penal code.

Of all the vexatious measures which the ingenuity of man had invented against Catholicism, the most despicable and immoral were those which attached restrictions to the possession or tenure of land. Many of these, it is true, on account of their very severity, were rarely enforced, but they, none the less, hung like the sword of Damocles over the heads of the people. Accordingly, the abolition of these laws was naturally regarded as the first great end to be attained. In the year 1777, the Catholic nobility and gentry of Ireland addressed a petition¹ to the king, in which they complained, that it was not permitted to them to buy land, or to lease it for long terms ; that fear of the informers prevented them

¹ Printed in Curry's "State of the Catholics of Ireland," vol. ii. pp. 287-293.

carrying out any improvements on their estates ; and they, therefore, prayed for the repeal of all these and similar vexatious enactments. The Government was not at all indisposed to comply with such a request, but it was deemed advisable not to embody these reforms in a Government measure, but to allow them to originate with the House itself.

Even in the Irish House of Commons there were many members who were favourable to the demands of the Catholics, and a proposal of this nature was therefore not slow in making its appearance. Henry Grattan was an especially energetic advocate of a policy which should place Catholics and Protestants on a political equality ; but Flood and Charlemont, and other prominent men, while willing to accord the Catholics relief from all social restrictions, and the free exercise of their religion,¹ were strongly opposed to placing both confessions on an equal political footing. The initiative in the matter was, however, not taken by any of the leaders, but by Mr. Gardiner, who laid a bill before the House of Commons for the relief of the Catholics on the 27th May, 1778.

This motion related mainly to the acquisition of property ; and in Committee certain modifications were introduced which provided that Catholics should not be permitted to buy freehold land, but that they should be allowed to acquire estates on a lease of 999 years ; and in this slightly diluted form the bill was carried by 111 votes to 108. The amount of rent was left to be settled at discretion, a virtual acknowledgment that it was a question of but nominal importance ; consequently, this mode of transferring property only differed from an ordinary purchase in a matter of form. This measure also removed the restrictions relating to the right of Catholics to inherit property, as well as that degrading clause which provided that “the eldest son of a Catholic, on becoming a Protestant, could appropriate the revenues of his father’s estate.”²

¹ Compare Charlemont’s letter to Halliday, to be found in Lecky, vol. iv. pp. 471, 472 ; also “Life of Grattan,” i. p. 166.

² For this bill, and the parliamentary proceedings in connection with it, Buckinghamshire’s despatch to the secretary of state of the 20th June, 1778, which is printed in the “Memoirs of the Life of Grattan,” i. p. 329 is especially valuable.

Although the bill, in the above form, was passed by both Houses of the Irish Parliament, another danger threatened it of no mean significance. In the House of Commons a clause had been inserted which, in addition to the relief sought for the Catholics, was intended to free Presbyterians and other dissenters from the necessity of taking the oath imposed upon them by the Test Act. It was not only the friends and adherents of the Puritan party who had voted for this clause, and procured it a majority in Parliament; it was also supported by the party hostile to Catholic emancipation, at the head of which were Lords Shannon and Ely, who threw their votes into the scale in favour of the clause, hoping that its insertion would insure the rejection of the entire bill by the English Government. The prospects of the bill were, in fact, materially diminished hereby. George III., with his strong High Church views, was by no means disposed to place dissenters in all respects on an equality with members of the Anglican Church; but, least of all, was he, at that time, inclined to make concessions to the very party who were accused of favouring the American colonists. The ministry, too, were exercised with doubts and scruples on the subject, and, indeed, the appearance of things seemed to indicate that rather than any relief should be conceded to dissenters, the whole bill would be allowed to drop.

Just at this juncture Edmund Burke displayed remarkable activity in the interests of his fellow-countrymen.¹ He entered into spirited negotiations with North, the prime minister, and Wedderburn, the attorney-general; and was so far successful that, while the clause relating to the Test Act was abandoned, the provisions in favour of the Catholics were retained; and in this form the bill was returned by the English Privy Council to Ireland.

The opponents of Catholic emancipation still hoped that the Irish Parliament, irritated at the mutilation the bill had undergone, would eventually reject it. But in this instance, at least, Parliament pursued a truly statesmanlike policy,

¹ See Macknight's "History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke," vol. ii. p. 240 *et seq.*

Recognising the folly of refusing a good measure on the ground that it might have been better, the Irish legislature, on the 4th August, 1778, accepted the bill as it was returned from England: in the House of Commons by 127 votes to 89, in the House of Lords by 44 to 28; and thus the first momentous step was taken towards conferring equal rights and privileges on the Catholics and Protestants of Ireland.¹

This result was greeted by the Irish Catholics with joyous exultation. Burke, who had so nobly and warmly espoused their interests, was presented by Curry with a considerable sum of money collected by his co-religionists; and the citizens of Dublin resolved to erect a statue in his honour, a mark of distinction, however, which, with commendable modesty, the statesman declined.² Nor was the joy which now pervaded Catholic circles unjustifiable. For the first time in their history, as Burke wrote to an Irish friend immediately after the passing of this measure, the Irish Catholics were acknowledged to be subjects, and as such, the protection of the law was extended to them;³ while the preamble of the bill, which asserted that "all denominations should enjoy the blessings of a free constitution," gave rise to the hope that this law was but a preliminary step to the complete emancipation of the Catholics.

Thus, it must be admitted that in two distinct provinces, the religious and the commercial, an unmistakable advance had been made during the year 1778. But this year is eminently important as regards the history of Ireland in yet another respect. It was in 1778 that the Army of Volunteers was called into existence, an organization which subsequently played so important a part in achieving the political independence of the nation.

¹ For the division on this bill see the letter of the lord-lieutenant to Weymouth of the 10th August, 1778, in the "Memoirs of Grattan," i. p. 333. The enactment itself is to be found in the Irish Stat., 17 and 18 George III., c. 49.

² See Macknight, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 245; also Prior's "Memoirs of the Life and Character of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke," pp. 198, 199.

³ Burke's letter to Nagle on the 25th Aug., 1778, in Macknight, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 246.

CHAPTER XI.

FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF THE VOLUNTEERS (1778) TO THE ATTAINMENT OF LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE FOR IRELAND (1782).

THE league existing between France and the American colonies, added to the fear of a French invasion, naturally caused the attention of the Irish people to be directed towards the state of the country's defences ; with a result which was not of a very encouraging character. Of the 15,000 troops composing the Irish army, 4,000 were employed in America ; and of the rest, owing to the wretched condition of the finances, a considerable portion existed only on paper ; while the English fleet, which might have been a real protection to Ireland, was engaged elsewhere. England had hitherto strenuously resisted all the attempts of the Irish to raise a militia ; consequently, in case of a sudden attack, Ireland would be entirely defenceless.

In view of this deplorable situation, some of the most prominent landowners in the House of Commons announced their readiness to organize, without delay, an independent company of volunteers among their own tenantry. This proposal the lord-lieutenant forwarded to the English secretary of state¹ on the 21st April, 1778, accompanied by an intimation that, in the opinion of the Privy Council, as well as in that of the House of Commons, either a militia, or a body of volunteers was absolutely necessary for the safety of the country ; and in consideration of the costliness of a militia, and the terribly exhausted condition of the treasury, he recommended the raising of a volunteer corps, to be paid by the state.

¹ Printed in the "Memoirs of the Life of Grattan," i. p. 300.

But even for an arrangement of this nature the means of the Government were inadequate. The Irish exchequer was in such a miserable plight that it became necessary to borrow £20,000 in order to defray unavoidable expenditure, and on the 16th May, 1778, the Government was compelled to suspend the payment of official salaries, and to declare its insolvency.¹ The prospects with regard to the defences of the country were, therefore, so dismal that when, on rumours of a foreign invasion, the town of Belfast requested the Government to send it military protection, Sir R. Heron, the Irish secretary, had to confess that the utmost number of troops it was possible to place at the disposal of the capital town of Ulster was half a squadron of cavalry and half a company of invalids.²

By announcing its insolvency the Government had, as it were, abdicated ; and accordingly the people took their fate into their own hands. Inspired by an enthusiasm which has rarely been witnessed in the history of any nation, the cry resounded through the land, "To arms!" The gentry in every part of the country determined to organize, at their own expense, companies of volunteers for the defence of their respective districts. The large landowners equipped their tenants with arms and uniform, and placed themselves at the head of their people. Thus, the Dublin county corps was commanded by the Duke of Leinster, and that of Armagh by Lord Charlemont. The Catholics, who had not yet been invested with the right to carry arms, none the less, contributed towards the expenses of the equipment, and in the county of Limerick alone they collected the sum of £200 for this object.³

The Government regarded this action on the part of the nation with very mingled feelings ; nevertheless, it could not

¹ Respecting the transactions with the banking-house of Latouche, and the suspension of payments, see the letters of the lord-lieutenant to Weymouth and North, of the 30th April and the 16th May, 1778, respectively, in Grattan's "Life," i. pp. 321, 324.

² See Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 194.

³ For the commencement of the movement see "Life of Grattan," i. p. 343 ; also Hardy, *loc. cit.*, p. 194.

be denied, that at a time of national bankruptcy, a popular movement of this nature was the only means by which a possible and hostile invasion could be repelled ; on the other hand, the existence of an independent popular army, in a country where so much discontent prevailed, and at a time when America was endeavouring to obtain fresh allies in Ireland, must have been an element of no inconsiderable danger to the tranquility of the land. On this account, the lord-lieutenant offered no sort of encouragement to the movement : on the contrary, he wrote to the English secretary of state, that he discouraged it to the utmost of his ability, in which course he was supported by the English ministry.¹

The embarrassments of the Government were still further increased by the wretched condition of affairs, social and financial. The embargo had not yet been taken off ; and this prohibition against the export of merchandise, together with the continuance of the war, resulted in the situation becoming more gloomy from month to month. In February of the year 1779, the sheriff of Dublin, in an address to the lord-lieutenant, stated that in the capital alone there were 19,000 persons without the bare necessities of life, who had formerly been engaged in the weaving trade, and whom nothing but an extension of commerce and the opportunity of exporting their manufactures could possibly save.²

In order to constrain England to adopt a more lenient commercial policy, a number of Irish writers, as Dobbs and Jebb, by means of letters published in the organs of the patriotic party, revived the proposal made by Dean Swift, fifty-eight years previously, to the effect that the Irish people should discard the use of English goods and confine themselves exclusively to articles of native manufacture. This proposal was enthusiastically accepted by the country, and at a meeting held in Dublin, on the 26th April, 1779, a resolution was carried condemning the importation into Ireland of

¹ See the letter to Lord Weymouth on the 24th May, 1779 (printed in "Life of Grattan," i. pp. 347-349), and Weymouth's reply of the 7th June (*ibid.*, p. 358).

² Comp. Lecky, iv. p. 487.

the products of British industry. A declaration of this kind was naturally regarded by the lord-lieutenant as an extremely critical matter, but as a direct interference on the part of the Government could but tend to increase the excitement on this subject, and add fuel to the flames, he decided to pass it over in silence. The agitation, however, continued to spread, more especially after the volunteers indentified themselves with the movement ; and when, in spite of the resolution which had been passed, some tradesmen persisted in importing English wares, their names were held up to public reprobation in the Dublin press.¹

Meanwhile, rumours of an impending invasion became more frequent ; and a landing in Ireland was, in fact, actually designed. Spain having, on the 12th April, 1779, concluded an alliance with France and America, the French minister, Vergennes, in a letter to the Spanish minister, Florida Blanca, divulged the fact of a projected invasion of Ireland. In furtherance of this design, it had been arranged that an American agent should be engaged in promoting the interests of the allies among the Presbyterians of the north ; while the task of winning over the Irish Catholics was to be assigned to the Spaniards.²

At the prospect of a league between the Irish Catholics and foreign foes, the uneasy consciences of English statesmen caused them to tremble. Weymouth, secretary of state, in a letter to the viceroy, openly avowed his fears that the Irish Catholic seminaries in France and Flanders would be sending large numbers of their pupils as secret agents to Ireland.³

But these apprehensions were utterly groundless. Notwithstanding the fact that they were still deprived of all the rights and privileges of citizens, the Catholics proved themselves, on this occasion also, thoroughly loyal. Their most gifted public writer, the monk O'Leary, issued a proclamation

¹ See the letters of Buckinghamshire to Lord Weymouth, of the 29th April, 1779 ("Life of Grattan," i. p. 345), and the 29th May, 1779 (*ibid.*, i. p. 353).

² See Lecky, iv. p. 491.

³ See Weymouth's letter to the lord-lieutenant of the 4th August, 1779 ("Life of Grattan," i. p. 369).

addressed to the masses of the nation, in which he called upon them to unite with their Protestant fellow-citizens in defence of their land, which was then being menaced ; while the Catholics of Waterford and other towns presented a memorial to the Government, in which they expressed their willingness to sacrifice all that they possessed in the service of their country.¹

The reports of an intended invasion which were continually — being circulated afresh, gave a new impulse to the volunteer movement.² On the 24th May, 1779, the viceroy estimated the force at only 8,000 ; six months later it had increased to 42,000. This magnificent army, which did not cost the sorely pressed state a single farthing, so covered the exposed coasts that, according to a statement made by Buckinghamshire, a foreign invasion would never at any previous time have met with such vigorous and determined resistance as Ireland was now prepared to offer. This army maintained order in the country in an exemplary manner, and never were disturbances and acts of violence rarer than they were during this period. Little as the Government sympathized with the movement, it was, nevertheless, destined to contribute to its efficiency. In the national armoury there was stored a large supply of arms, originally intended for the militia. As there was, however, now no further use for these weapons, and as the volunteers had repeatedly petitioned for them, at the instance of the Privy Council the Government finally yielded to their request, and distributed to this force 16,000 muskets.³

Meanwhile, the Irish Parliament had again been opened on the 12th October, 1779, on which occasion the lord-lieutenant's speech from the throne was as insipid and full of platitudes as if the affairs of the country had been in the most flourishing condition possible. But when, on the ministerial benches of the House of Commons, there was an attempt to reply to it

¹ See Lecky, iv. p. 495.

² Comp. the lord-lieutenant's letter of the 24th May, 1779, in the "Life of Grattan," i. pp. 347-349 ; *ibid.*, p. 399.

³ Concerning the proceedings of the Privy Council on the 29th July, 1779, with respect to the grant of arms, see the "Life of Grattan," vol. i. p. 376.

by an address equally formal and colourless, Henry Grattan rose in his place, and in a brilliant speech,¹ dictated by the most fervent patriotism, portrayed the gloomy condition of the country, and suggested that an amendment be moved to the address, making special reference to the unhappy circumstances of the Irish nation, and proposing a free and unshackled commerce as the only means by which the sufferings of the people could be mitigated and the credit of the state restored. This proposal met with general acceptance, among those who declared themselves in its favour being two prominent servants of the Crown ; and on a motion made by Flood, an amendment to the address was carried which expressly set forth, “that it is not by temporising expedients, but by a free trade alone, that this nation is now to be saved from impending ruin.”²

After the address had been carried in the House of Commons, it was eventually conveyed to the lord-lieutenant by the entire Parliament in solemn procession ; while the Dublin volunteers, under the command of the Duke of Leinster, lined the route and presented arms before the speaker. It was an impressive and an unusual spectacle. Parliament, which had so long been scoffed at by the people as an assembly of place-hunters, had, since the passing of this resolution, suddenly become popular with the masses ; and had also, in its turn, grown so profuse in its liberality, that when on the following day a motion was made by Conolly, to the effect that thanks were due to the Volunteer Corps for their energetic action in defence of the country, it was unanimously agreed to.

The answer which the Crown³ returned to the address prudently evaded all reference to difficult questions, and merely expressed the readiness of the Government to adopt all measures which might be calculated to promote the wel-

¹ See Grattan’s “Speeches,” i. p. 20 *et seq.*; comp. also Hardy’s “Life of Charlemont,” p. 200; and the “Life of Grattan,” i. p. 384 *et seq.*, also pp. 391–395, where are to be found the letters of the lord-lieutenant on the subject of this debate.

² See Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 170 *et seq.*

³ “Life of Grattan,” i. p. 398.

fare of his majesty's subjects. The uncertainty involved in this reply, however, produced dissatisfaction on all hands ; and so quickly had the recent harmony vanished, that in volunteer circles the threat was openly uttered, that "if the House refused to procure justice for them, every man would obtain it for himself."

On the 4th November, 1779, when, according to the custom of late years, the birthday of William III., the founder of the English colony in Ireland, was publicly celebrated, the Volunteer Corps of Dublin and the neighbourhood took advantage of the occasion to make a brilliant demonstration. In front of the statue of the Prince of Orange, the Duke of Leinster held an imposing parade ; the statue itself was adorned with emblems, and mottoes couched in very unambiguous language ; while in face of it were placed two pieces of artillery, which bore the significant inscription, "Free trade or this!"¹

The masses of the people were, however, not satisfied with mere demonstrations. It having been suggested in Parliament to grant only a six months' money bill, as a means of holding the Government in a certain position of dependence, a mob from the outlying districts, to the number of 6,000 men, gathered before the Parliament Houses, besieged the carriage of the speaker, and exacted from several members an oath binding them "to vote for the rights of Ireland and a short money bill." Scott, the attorney-general, had in some way incurred the special aversion of the mob, and his house was accordingly made the object of an organized attack. When Scott shortly afterward complained of the conduct of the people, and alluded to the volunteers as the originators of the disturbance, a member of the House, named Yelverton, spoke in defence of the movement, in return for which he was designated by Scott "the seneschal of sedition." Grattan, the leader of the popular party, on the other hand, advocated prudence and moderation, and protested against all such acts of violence as being calculated to imperil the rights and privileges which their efforts had already won for them.²

¹ Comp., in addition to the "Life of Grattan," Adolphus, iii. p. 171.

² See "Life of Grattan," i. p. 401.

But temperate and moderate as Grattan was in his methods, he was essentially firm and unwavering in his demands ; and it was substantially owing to his action, that when, on the 24th November, 1779, Sir R. Heron, secretary of state, proposed to levy fresh taxes for the payment of arrears, the House passed a resolution declaring that the times did not warrant new taxation. On this question the administration was only supported by 47 votes against 170, in a house of representatives at whose election, as we have seen, the Government had exercised an overwhelming influence.¹

The next day, on voting the estimates in connection with the budget, the same spectacle was repeated. The Government desired to see the budget agreed to for two years ; while the popular party wished to limit the time to six months. An amendment to this effect was supported, not only by Grattan, but also by the Prime Sergeant Burgh, who, in a powerful speech, described the baneful influence which the English Parliament exerted upon Ireland ; the worst laws which the jealous, thankless, and monopolising spirit of the neighbouring country had been able to invent were still maintained by England in their integrity. The Irish were treated with ferocious cruelty by the English, and the words “penal statute” and “Ireland” were almost regarded as synonyms. He concluded with the following words : “Talk to me not of peace ! Ireland is in no state of peace ; it is a state of smothered war. England has sown her laws among us like dragon’s teeth, and they have now sprung up in armed men.” A tremendous burst of applause resounded through the House at the close of this speech, and on the votes being taken, the Government was defeated by a majority of thirty-eight.

This speech, however, meant for Burgh the renunciation of his connection with the Government. Not willing to accept the emoluments of office from a Government whose system of administration he disapproved, he immediately resigned the high post which he occupied. As Grattan wrote in reference

¹ For the parliamentary proceedings of the 24th and 25th November, see Grattan’s “Speeches,” i. pp. 30-38 ; also “Life of Grattan,” i. p. 402.

to Burgh's resignation : "The gates of promotion were shut as the gates of glory opened."¹

While these events were taking place in Ireland, the English Parliament had assembled at Westminster, and here, too, the ministry of Lord North had to sustain a sharp attack from the Whigs on the subject of its conduct of Irish affairs. Already, in the House of Lords, during the debate on the address, the Cabinet had been severely blamed by the Marquis of Rockingham ; and on the 1st December, 1779, in the same place, Lord Shelburne took a more decided step, and moved a direct vote of censure against those ministers who had neglected to take such measures as were necessary for the welfare of Ireland, and thus had endangered the union between the two kingdoms. A similar motion was made in the House of Commons, on the 6th December, 1779, by the Earl of Upper Ossory, and seconded by Charles James Fox in a brilliant speech, which at the same time disclosed an accurate knowledge of Irish affairs.² Both motions, it is true, were defeated ; nevertheless, North gradually arrived at the conviction that further mistakes on this question would be inexpedient. The exhausted condition of every department of the treasury ; the refusal of the Irish Parliament to suffer fresh taxation ; the non-importation agitation ; the repeated admonitions of the lord-lieutenant,—were all considerations which, if he were not wishful to see the affairs of the nation transferred to the hands of the opposition, must have summoned him to immediate action. Accordingly, on the 13th December, 1779, heedless of the hostility of the English manufacturing towns, he laid before Parliament a number of proposals³ which were tantamount to a compliance with the demands made by Ireland. According to these proposals, the Irish were not only to be allowed the free export of woollen goods and glass wares, but trade with the British colonies in America, Africa, and the West Indies was to be absolutely unrestricted, subject

¹ "Life of Grattan," i. p. 403.

² See Adolphus, iii. pp. 175, 184 *et seq.* ; and, especially, the "Speeches" of Fox (Lond., 1815), vol. i. pp. 213, 214 *et seq.*

³ See Adolphus, iii. p. 189.

only to such duties and limitations as might be imposed by the Irish Parliament. After the Irish legislature had, on the 20th December, 1779, given its sanction to this step, and, in a couple of resolutions moved by Foster, had declared the removal of the prohibition relating to trade with the colonies, and the free export of woollen manufactures, to be a great boon for Ireland, in February, 1780, Lord North's proposals became law.

Thus perished that system of commercial restrictions in Ireland which, called into existence in the intolerant age of Charles II. and William III., had, for a period of more than a hundred years, been the source of unspeakable misery and strife.

These concessions being also followed by others of minor importance—among which may especially be mentioned that which relieved Irish dissenters from the disabilities¹ imposed on them by the Test Act in 1704,—this clemency of the Government was productive, for a time, of universal joy and contentment. By degrees, however, an apprehension began to manifest itself among the people, which of late years had politically made great advances, as to the stability of the benefits which had recently been bestowed on the nation. There was an uneasy feeling abroad that sheer necessity had compelled the British Government to grant these concessions ; and that, as Grattan in one of his speeches² said, the same power which had permitted the export of woollen goods and glass ware could likewise prohibit it again ; that, in a word, it required only a decree of the English legislature to wrest again from the Irish those liberties which, at the cost of so much labour and trouble, they had but just succeeded in obtaining. The antipathy of the popular party was, naturally, mainly directed against Poyning's Act, upon which the dependence of the Irish Parliament on the English Privy Council was based ; and against the Act of the sixth of George I. (p. 141), which established the appellate jurisdiction of the English House of Lords. Every endeavour to obtain legislative inde-

¹ Comp. Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 499.

² In his speech of the 19th April, 1780 ("Speeches," i. p. 40).

pendence received powerful support from the Volunteer Corps, who, being now a strongly organized body, gave expression to their views on this matter in various resolutions.

This new movement met with very decided opposition from the Government. The king was extremely averse to questions being raised which were calculated "to disturb the harmony, and the happy relations existing between England and Ireland,"¹ and, therefore, requested the lord-lieutenant resolutely to resist every proposal to change or re-model the constitution. Accordingly, the viceroy determined to use his patronage, and to exert all the influence he possessed upon the dependent element of the legislative assemblies, with the sole object of preventing any modification of the constitutional relationship between England and Ireland.

The popular party was not, however, deterred from its purpose; and on the 19th April, 1780, Henry Grattan introduced those famous resolutions which are known as the Irish "Declaration of Rights,"² and which are as follows:—

"(1) That the King's most excellent Majesty and the Lords and Commons of Ireland are the only powers competent to make binding laws for Ireland.

(2) That the Crown of Ireland is and ought to be inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain.

(3) That Great Britain and Ireland are inseparably united under one sovereign, by the common and indissoluble ties of interest, loyalty, and freedom."

These resolutions were introduced by Grattan in an impassioned speech which, even when we read it to-day, electrifies us by the glowing ardour and the noble pathos of its language, by its wealth of thought, and, above all, by the fervent patriotism which breathes in every sentence. No wonder that his listeners were literally carried away by it. "The oration which Grattan made on that occasion," writes a contemporary, "can never be forgotten by those who heard it.

¹ See the letter of Hillsborough, secretary of state, to Buckinghamshire, on the 28th March, 1780 ("Life of Grattan," ii. p. 31).

² Grattan's "Speeches," i. pp. 38-53.

The language of Milton or Shakspere can alone describe its effect."¹ Starting with the proposition that the commercial concessions which the English Parliament bestowed to-day it could withdraw to-morrow, he claimed that legislative independence was the only thing which could render Ireland happy and free. True, it would be contended, it was highly improbable that England would willingly relinquish the authority which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, she had once possessed. To such objections he would rejoin, that conciliatory proposals had been offered to America, according to which, not only was the right to impose taxes renounced, but the British Parliament also surrendered the right to make laws for the Americans. If, then, England had made such proposals to those who had revolted from the mother-country, could it be expected that when her loyal subjects asked for similar terms, Great Britain would refuse their demands? Nor must the gratitude which Ireland necessarily felt on account of the lately acquired concessions be adduced as a motive for rejecting his resolutions; for no depths of gratitude could require that Ireland should remain the slave of England. In conclusion he said, "I wish for nothing but to breathe, in this our island, in common with my fellow-subjects, the air of liberty. I have no ambition, unless it be the ambition to break your chains and contemplate your glory. And though great men should apostatize, yet the cause will live; and though the public speaker die, yet the immortal fire shall outlast the organ which conveyed it; and the breath of liberty, like the word of the holy man, will not die with the prophet, but survive him."

The importance attached to this speech by the entire House is proved by the fact that, except in the case of one single member of the Government, Scott, the attorney-general, no particular exception was taken to the substance of the motions; the only objections which were raised against them having

¹ Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 200. The lord-lieutenant, in a minute account which he wrote to Hillsborough on the 21st April, 1780, also alludes to the effect produced by this speech ("Life of Grattan," vol. ii. pp. 52-55).

reference to their opportuneness ; and as the House considered the present moment to be ill-timed for the introduction of such resolutions, a motion of adjournment was carried. Nevertheless, the whole proceedings were sufficient to impress the lord-lieutenant with the conviction that "the House was unanimously agreed that the statutes of the English Parliament were not legally binding upon the Irish kingdom."¹

The question of legislative independence played an important part in other debates. Thus, on the 28th April, 1780, Yelverton moved for a modification of Poyning's law, and demanded that the English Privy Council be deprived of the right to alter bills passed by the Irish Parliament ; but the viceroy having received instructions to oppose every proposition of this nature, brought the whole weight of his influence to bear against it, with the result that the motion was lost by twenty-five votes.²

A similar constitutional controversy arose out of the debates on the Irish Mutiny Act. Ireland had hitherto possessed no Mutiny Act of her own, and Irish deserters had, consequently, to be dealt with according to the English Act. Hutchinson had declared in the Irish Parliament, that the British Mutiny Act was not legally binding on Ireland, and other members having expressed similar views, certain magistrates drew the natural inference that they would be justified in acquitting two deserters who were brought before them, on the ground that the British Mutiny Act had not the force of law in Ireland. As this decision was calculated to have very serious results on the discipline of the Irish army, on the 19th April, 1780, a mutiny bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Bushe, which, in its details, was closely assimilated to the English Act.³

The Government was now on the horns of a dilemma. To give its assent to the bill would be a tacit acknowledgment of

¹ See the letter to Hillsborough referred to above.

² See Buckinghamshire's despatch to Hillsborough of the 29th April, 1780, contained in the "Life of Grattan," ii. pp. 78-80.

³ For information on this subject see the letter of Heron, the Irish secretary, and the despatches of Buckinghamshire, in "Life of Grattan," ii. pp. 71-73.

the want of binding force in the English Act, while to oppose it would endanger military discipline ; for, according to the opinions of the members of the Privy Council, there were but few magistrates to be found who would apply the British Mutiny Act, and scarcely a jury who would pay the least regard to its provisions. It seemed, therefore, to these Irish statesmen, drifting about aimlessly and helplessly, that, under the circumstances, it would be an immediate gain to postpone the final decision of the question. Accordingly, on May 8th, Sir R. Heron moved the adjournment of the House for fourteen days, in order that he might, in the meantime, be enabled to obtain instructions from London. When, however, the term of this respite had expired, it was decided to oppose the bill ; a futile decision, inasmuch as on the 22nd May, Bushe's motion was carried by 140 against 18. The motives which animated the majority were, it is true, very various ; and only a small proportion of those constituting it were influenced in giving their votes by the principles enunciated in the Declaration of Rights ; by far the greater number being untroubled about the constitutional subtleties of the question, and merely voting for the motion because they were anxious for the speedy passing of a Mutiny Act, in order to avert the dangers which threatened the discipline of the army.¹

The vote of the majority, many of whom were connected with the Court, was, therefore, far from signifying a want of confidence in the Government ; and in consideration of this fact, it was deemed prudent not to make it the occasion of a parliamentary conflict. The bill was, accordingly, not thrown out by the English Privy Council, but was returned to Ireland with the important alteration, that the words which limited the operation of this Act to one year were struck out, and consequently the Mutiny Act, as enacted by this bill, would be in force in perpetuity. By this alteration the Irish Parliament lost the control over the army ; a privilege which was jealously

¹ Comp. the despatches to be found in the "Life of Grattan," ii. pp. 85-98. The speech delivered by Fox in the English House of Commons, on the 23rd February, 1781, is also interesting as bearing on this question (See Fox, "Speeches," i. p. 308 *et seq.*).

guarded by the English Parliament. This result was extremely displeasing to the popular party, and on the 16th August,¹ Grattan pointed out that a Mutiny Act in perpetual force would confer upon the king unlimited authority over the army, and that, in this respect, the Irish Parliament was at a disadvantage as compared with the kindred assembly in England, in so far as it was deprived of one of its most important functions—control over its military forces. But notwithstanding his energetic speech, in which he characterized the newly created state of things as a species of slavery, the House was not disposed to follow him; but was, on the contrary, anxious to confirm the vote of the 22nd May, and, accordingly, the perpetual Mutiny Bill was accepted by a considerable majority.

It shortly, however, became evident that the popular mind was not satisfied with this result. The very day after the acceptance of the bill, the Dublin Volunteer Corps passed a resolution, in which they thanked the minority in Parliament for upholding national rights and privileges, and designated the perpetual Mutiny Act as “an undermining of the constitution and an infringement of liberty.” Other volunteer corps passed resolutions of similar import; while one corps declared its determination never more to vote for any of the members who had constituted the majority which carried the bill.²

The prorogation of Parliament took place on the 2nd September, 1780, and was immediately followed by a change in the administration. Although Buckinghamshire had entered upon the lord-lieutenancy under the most trying circumstances, and, notwithstanding this, had been able to show tolerable results, he, nevertheless, failed to earn the gratitude of the statesmen of England; after an administration of four years, he was recalled with but scant courtesy, and the appointment of Lord Carlisle followed in December. The new viceroy was as little acquainted with the state of Irish affairs as his secretary, Sir W. Eden; and yet, never was it

¹ See “Speeches” of Grattan, i. pp. 62–81.

² Certain of the resolutions are printed in the “Life of Grattan,” ii. pp. 129, 146.

more imperatively necessary that there should be at the head of the nation men of indomitable energy, familiar with the condition of Ireland, than it was at the present time, when vast difficulties were gathering on every hand.

In spite of the liberation of commerce, great depression prevailed in every department of industry as a consequence of the war ; in addition to which, Irish manufacturers were threatened with the outbreak of a fiscal war with Portugal which might prove highly disastrous.¹

Rumours of a French invasion also gained fresh currency, in view of which the volunteers again offered their services to the Government. Lord Charlemont, the commander of the collective corps of Leinster and Ulster, consulted with the lord-lieutenant, who confirmed the report of a probable invasion, and mentioned Cork harbour as the point which would be likely to attract the enemy in the first place. Hereupon, Charlemont hastened to Ulster, in which province the volunteers, overflowing with martial ardour, straightway determined to march south and combine with the feeble remnants of the existing regular army. The same eagerness was displayed in all the provinces, and in every class of society in the land. In Newry, when the younger men were about to proceed to the defence of Munster, the elder married men of the place immediately formed themselves into a new corps, which was known by the name of "The Ladies' Fencibles."²

Although, by a foolish enactment, the Catholics were still prohibited from bearing arms, they were resolved not to be behind their Protestant fellow-citizens in their demonstrations of patriotism. A rich Catholic merchant of Cork, named Gould, placed £12,000 at the disposal of the Government in the name of himself and his friends, for purposes of defence ; and, at the same time, tendered further aid, should it be required.³ This mighty national impulse made, in the end, such

¹ See Lecky, iv. pp. 520, 521.

² Comp. Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," pp. 206-208.

³ This offer is referred to in a communication from Lord Carlisle to Hillsborough, dated 17th Sept., 1781 ; see Lecky, iv. p. 523 ; also Mac-knight's "History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke," vol. ii. p. 450.

an impression on the enemy, that the French and Spanish fleet of thirty-four sail, which had appeared in the Channel in September, 1781, abandoned all attempts at landing.

Thus, the volunteers had once more formed the main defence of the country, and in acknowledgment of this, Carlisle, the lord-lieutenant, was anxious to insert in the speech with which he intended to open Parliament, on the 9th October, 1781, a paragraph expressing to the volunteers the thanks of the Government. But the English minister, Hillsborough, refused his consent to any recognition of an inconvenient institution;¹ and, consequently, Carlisle was forced to confine himself to general phrases, expressive of "satisfaction at the offers of assistance which had reached the Government from all parts of the kingdom."² The Irish Parliament was, however, more frank in its acknowledgments. Immediately after the close of the debate on the address, the House of Commons passed a hearty vote of thanks³ to the volunteer corps of the entire kingdom, for all their exertions, and especially for the courageous preparations they had made in view of the foreign invasion with which they had recently been threatened.

At the beginning of the session of 1781, Yelverton, a parliamentary representative whose name has several times been mentioned in these pages, added another to the matters of dispute between the Government and the national party. The English fleet having failed, during the previous summer, to afford any protection to the Irish coasts, Yelverton suggested that for the defence of her shores, Ireland should create a navy of her own, out of Irish state funds; and he accompanied this proposal with a violent attack on the Government which had so egregiously neglected its obligation to guard and defend the land. "We pay the king," he said, "the hereditary revenue for our protection, while we are left abandoned; we pay it expressly for the purpose of protecting our

¹ Comp. extracts from the correspondence between Carlisle and Hillsborough, to be found in Lecky, iv. p. 523.

² The speech from the throne is to be found in Grattan's "Speeches," vol. i. pp. 82-84.

³ Respecting this proposal, which was moved by O'Neill, see Grattan's "Speeches," i. p. 85.

trade, while the money is applied to the pension-list to reward those who vote against the interests of the nation." This scheme for the organization of a fleet, however, met with decided opposition from the English minister, Hillsborough, who was determined to discountenance any proposal which could possibly tend to enlarge the sphere of influence wielded by the Irish Parliament ; and the question was, therefore, adjourned.¹

This session also witnessed the renewal of the contest concerning the perpetual Mutiny Act. Henry Grattan desired to see an Act passed similar to the one in force in England, which was voted year by year ;² and, accordingly, he moved the repeal of the perpetual Mutiny Act. He was supported by several members of the popular party, and particularly by Flood, who, having been deprived by Carlisle of the post of vice-president of the treasury, as well as having had his name removed from the list of the Privy Council, had now returned to the ranks of the opposition, as a means of restoring his somewhat damaged popularity. The motion was, nevertheless, defeated by a considerable majority ; nor was the result more favourable, when, in a modified form the question was once more brought forward by Flood, who, seeing no prospect of its acceptance, was ultimately compelled to withdraw his motion.³

Equally unsuccessful were the efforts of the popular party to accomplish the repeal of Poyning's law. With this end in view, a proposal was introduced by Yelverton on the 4th December, 1781, but, just at that time, the news reached Ireland of the capture of General Cornwallis, in Virginia ; and under the pressure of this national calamity, Yelverton deemed the time ill-suited to a discussion of constitutional questions. "With a propriety which was felt universally by the House," he withdrew his motion, and substituted for it an address to the Crown which expressed the attachment of the Irish Parlia-

¹ For details concerning the scheme for the construction of a fleet refer to the "Life of Grattan," ii. p. 190 ; Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. pp. 525, 526, who here cites a letter from Hillsborough, hitherto unpublished.

² See Grattan's "Speeches," i. pp. 85-89.

³ Comp. "Life of Grattan," ii. p. 192.

ment to the Throne, and its zeal for the welfare of the British realm. This address was readily carried ; and during the entire debate no mention was made of Irish grievances or demands.¹ Subsequently, however, Yelverton's motion was again taken up ; and this time by Flood, who, feeling secretly annoyed that after having once occupied the foremost position in the House, he was now compelled to fill one much less conspicuous, complained that after having devoted the study of twenty years to this subject, it was now being literally wrested from his hands. Yelverton, in his reply, observed that the previous speaker had, by his many years' silence, forfeited all claim to consideration in the matter, and reminded him of that Roman law which provided that, when a man separated himself from his wife, and abandoned and was faithless to her for seven years, another man was entitled to take her under his care and extend to her his protection. Nevertheless, Yelverton supported the motion, which was, however, again defeated by a considerable majority.²

On one point, it is true, the popular party achieved its object. The Habeas Corpus Bill, which had several times been passed by Parliament, but as persistently rejected by England, was now finally accepted ; and thus, one, at least, of the tasks which the national party had proposed to itself was at length accomplished.

The Catholic question was now once more taken in hand. In December, 1781, Gardiner, a member of Parliament who had rendered distinguished services in connection with the reforms of 1778 (p. 194), gave notice of a bill which was designed to grant to Catholics the free exercise of their religion, in addition to the right to carry arms, to acquire landed property, and to marry Protestants. But similar proposals in England having, about that time, occasioned the Gordon riots, with their wild "No Popery!" clamour, the English minister, Hillsborough, considered that, under existing circumstances, the introduction of such a bill would be hazardous ; as he feared

¹ See the despatches of Lord-Lieutenant Carlisle to Hillsborough, of the 5th December, 1781 (Lecky, iv. p. 527).

² Comp. "Life of Grattan," ii. p. 196 *et seq.*

that, in view of the prejudices of the Irish Presbyterians, a measure of this nature might, in the north of Ireland, be attended with like results.¹ Hillsborough was, however, but imperfectly acquainted with the condition of affairs in Ireland, and he completely overlooked the fact that religious differences were fast disappearing in consequence of the vigorous national movement that was taking place throughout the land. The bill met with no opposition whatever in the country, and in Parliament it found ample support. No one, for instance, upheld the principles of the bill with greater zeal or energy than the staunch Protestant, Grattan. "I give my consent to the bill," he declared in the House of Commons, "because I would not keep two millions of my fellow-subjects in a condition of slavery, and because, as the author of the 'Declaration of Rights,' I should be ashamed of giving freedom to about six hundred thousand of my countrymen, when I could extend it to two millions more."²

On this question, also, the Catholics of Ireland received the support of their illustrious fellow-countryman who resided on the other side of the Irish Sea. On the 21st February, 1782, Edmund Burke published his famous letter to Lord Kenmare, an Irish peer, in which he criticised Gardiner's measure.³ In his opinion the scope of the bill was not wide enough; and he took particular exception to it on the ground that it merely demanded the free exercise of religion, whereas the great desideratum was political equality; for only by investing the Catholics with the same political rights and privileges which were enjoyed by their Protestant fellow-citizens, could they be converted into loyal subjects. These aims, it is true, were not realized; but the efforts of the intolerant Protestants to defeat the measure by a motion of

¹ See the letter from Carlisle to Hillsborough of the 24th January, 1782 (Lecky, iv. p. 529).

² Concluding words of a speech delivered on the 20th February, 1782 (see Grattan's "Speeches," i. pp. 98-104).

³ The "Letter to a Peer of Ireland on the Penal Laws against the Irish Catholics" is to be found in Burke's "Works" (Lond., 1808), vol. vi. pp. 271-296. Comp. also Macknight's "History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke," vol. ii. p. 518.

adjournment were equally unsuccessful, and the bill passed into committee. Here various modifications were introduced, but before the deliberations of the committee were concluded the English Government was overthrown, and the change in the administration delayed, for a time, the further progress of this measure of reform.

While these proceedings were taking place in the legislative assemblies of the land, the association which represented the real power of the country had taken a step which was destined to be followed by important results. On the 28th December, 1781, the first regiment of Ulster volunteers, under the command of Lord Charlemont, invited the volunteer associations of the entire province of Ulster to send delegates to a certain town in the province, for the purpose of deliberating on the state of public affairs. This invitation was accepted by 143 of the volunteer corps of Ulster, whose delegates, to the number of 142, met in conference at Dungannon Church, on the 15th February. In this assembly, which was presided over by Colonel Irvine, and comprised a large number of the most prominent men in the country, and several members of Parliament, various important resolutions were carried, which for the most part had been drawn up by Grattan, Flood, and Charlemont.¹ In the first place, the assembly, backed by 25,000 armed men, passed a resolution to the effect, that a citizen forfeited none of his civil rights by the practice of arms. The assembled delegates then protested against Ireland's legislative dependence upon England; against the unconstitutional rights of the English Privy Council; against a perpetual Mutiny Act; and they also demanded for Ireland unconditional freedom of commerce. With reference to the religious question, the following important resolution was carried, with but two dissentients: "That we hold the right of private judgment in matters of religion to be equally sacred in others as in ourselves; and that as Christians and

¹ Respecting the preparations for the Dungannon Convention, see the "Life of Grattan," ii. p. 203 *et seq.*; also Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 212. The resolutions are contained in the "Life of Grattan," pp. 204, 205.

Protestants, as men and Irishmen, we rejoice in the relaxation of the penal laws against our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects ; and that we conceive the measure to be fraught with the happiest consequences to the union and prosperity of the inhabitants of Ireland." Finally, the assembly passed a vote of thanks, in the form of an address, to the members of the parliamentary opposition, for "the noble and spirited, although hitherto ineffectual, efforts" which, on great constitutional questions, they had made in defence of the rights of Ireland. "The unanimous voice of the people is with you," it was said to the representatives of the popular party, "and in a free country the voice of the people must prevail."¹

The volunteers of Leinster, Munster and Connaught also adopted the resolutions of the Dungannon convention, and thus encouraged by the support of an armed and united people, the popular party decided to take more energetic action. Accordingly, on the 22nd February, 1782, after having in the course of a long speech² adduced historical proof that the right which England claimed to bind Ireland by British Acts of Parliament had no legal basis,—that it was a right which had been gradually assumed,—Grattan moved that a memorial be presented to his majesty embodying the principles adopted by the Dungannon convention, and demanding the legislative independence of the country. During this speech he repeatedly appealed to the magnanimity of the British nation ; and in order to obviate the possibility of misconstruction, he, in conclusion, laid especial stress upon the unshaken attachment of the Irish to their king, and declared that next to their liberty, they more than all things prized their union with England, upon which the happiness of both kingdoms depended. But, in spite of these assurances, and notwithstanding the fact that he was supported by other prominent speakers, in particular by Flood and Burgh, Grattan's proposals were defeated by a motion of adjournment which was moved by Scott, the attorney-general, who feared that the passing of such measures could only result in anarchy and confusion ;

¹ See Hardy, *loc. cit.*, p. 212 ; Lecky, iv. p. 534.

² See Grattan's "Speeches," i. pp. 104-119.

and when, some days afterward, Flood again introduced them in another form, they met with no better fate.¹

The Government had thus once more repulsed the attack ; but when we take a glance behind the scenes, and look at the despatches² of the lord-lieutenant to the English secretary of state, we perceive that they are pervaded by no feeling of triumph. Carlisle repeatedly and emphatically states that, taking into consideration the temper then prevailing in Ireland, it was absolutely impracticable to insist on the binding force of British Acts of Parliament ; not even the most devoted servant of the Crown could venture to apply an English law, because every attempt would be frustrated by the opposition which it would evoke ; neither would any jury return a verdict in accordance with the requirements of a British enactment.

The chief objection raised against Grattan's motion by Scott, was that it would imperil the security of landed property throughout Ireland. Hundreds of landowners had received their possessions under the sanction of British Acts of Parliament, and if it were now suddenly declared that these laws had no binding force, the result, it was feared, would be that the rights of property would be very generally disturbed. In view of these dangers, Yelverton proposed, in March, 1782, that those English enactments which related to Irish landed property, or to the concessions granted to Irish commerce, should be invested with legal force by special Acts of the Irish Parliament.³ The bill embodying this proposal received the support of every party in Ireland, and the lord-lieutenant warmly recommended it to Hillsborough, secretary of state.⁴ This bill was, however, as embarrassing to the English Government as the Mutiny Act had formerly been, inasmuch as its rejection by England would, it was to be apprehended, be accompanied by social disturbances in Ireland, while its acceptance would be an indirect acknowledg-

¹ Comp. "Life of Grattan," ii. pp. 207, 208.

² Extracts herefrom may be found in Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. pp. 536-542.

³ See Adolphus, *loc. cit.* (ed. 1810), vol. iii. p. 410 ; also Lecky, iv. p. 537.

⁴ In a letter to Hillsborough of March 27th, 1782 (Lecky, iv. p. 538).

ment that British Acts of Parliament possessed no validity for Ireland. Before the Government was able to extricate itself from the dilemma in which it was thus placed, events occurred which resulted in the fall of the ministry.

The disasters in America provided the Whig opposition with ample grounds for a successful attack on the administration of Lord North. Accordingly, the House of Commons expressed its sense of the situation by carrying a resolution, moved by Conway, severely condemning the external policy of the Government, and when, notwithstanding this, the ministry gave no indication of an intention to resign, a direct vote of want of confidence was moved on the 8th March, 1782, and defeated by only ten votes. It was intended to repeat the attack on March 20, but in the meantime Lord North suddenly announced his resignation, and the Marquis of Rockingham was entrusted with the formation of a new ministry, in which Fox and some other prominent members of the Whig party filled important positions. Owing to this change of administration, Carlisle was also recalled, and the post of lord-lieutenant was conferred on the Duke of Portland.¹

Immediately after the accession to office of the new ministry, Irish affairs came up for discussion in the English House of Commons. On the 8th April, 1782, there suddenly appeared in that assembly, Sir W. Eden, who had been secretary during the administration of the late viceroy, but who had been removed from this post on the recall of his chief. Although he had hitherto, in his official capacity, met all the demands of the Irish for legislative independence with persistent opposition, he now, in the course of a speech, dilated upon the immense significance and importance of the volunteer movement, and upon the impossibility of disregarding the wishes of that body, which were likewise the wishes of the whole of Ireland, and concluded by moving for the repeal of the Act of the sixth year of George I., which conferred upon the English Parliament the right to enact binding laws for

¹ More detailed information concerning this change of ministry is to be found in Sir Erskine May's "Constitutional History of England since the Accession of George III." (trans. Oppenheim, 1862, bd. i. p. 40).

Ireland. A motion of this nature, originating with a man who, when in office, had pursued a policy diametrically opposed to that which he now advocated, and introduced, moreover, at a moment when the ministry had but just entered upon office, and, consequently, had had no opportunity of making itself acquainted with the condition of Irish affairs, was naturally regarded merely as a stratagem intended to embarrass the Government, and as such it was characterized in forcible language by Charles Fox.¹

That the ministerial opposition to Eden's motion arose from no hostile attitude of the cabinet towards the Irish, but that, in fact, the new ministry was strongly disposed to grant the demands of that nation, was shown the next day after Eden's motion had been withdrawn. Charles Fox, secretary of state, read to the House of Commons a royal message, in which his majesty deplored the discontent which prevailed among his loyal subjects in Ireland, and earnestly recommended the House to take these matters into its serious consideration, in order to arrive at such a final adjustment as might be satisfactory to both kingdoms.²

Meanwhile, the parliamentary recess in Ireland was at an end, and the first meeting of the House took place on the 16th April, the speaker having specially invited all those members who had at heart the maintenance of the rights and privileges of the nation to be present. Grattan had also previously given notice that he intended, on that day, to introduce his motion demanding legislative independence; consequently, the eyes of the entire nation were eagerly directed towards this sitting. But the English Government were anxious that this debate should be postponed for a few weeks, in order to afford the ministry time to become familiar with the details of Irish business, and in fact, Fox and Rockingham made a direct request on the subject. Grattan and Charlemont, however, the leaders of the popular party, declined to accede to this desire, alleging as their reason, that the mind of the nation had for a long period been in a state of tension with

¹ Comp. Fox, "Speeches," vol. ii. pp. 49-56.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 57.

regard to this debate, and Parliament owed it to the people no longer to delay the discussion of this question. At the same time, these men also refused to accept any Irish office, on the ground that they wished to be free and unfettered when a critical moment should arrive, and because, moreover, they were unwilling to expose themselves to the suspicion that they were pursuing an interested policy.¹

The session commencing on April 16 was, therefore, opened under circumstances of great excitement; the streets in the neighbourhood of the House of Parliament were thronged with eager multitudes, while in the House itself nearly every place was occupied. Hutchinson, the Irish secretary, opened the proceedings by reading the royal message, which, as we have seen, had already been communicated to the English House of Commons, after which he said a few words expressive of his own personal sympathy with the country's cause, and urged the House to observe firmness and unanimity. In reply to the royal message, Ponsonby moved an address to his majesty, which contained the thanks of the nation and the assurance that the House would take under its consideration the questions suggested without delay.

Henry Grattan then rose, looking still pale and worn from a recent severe illness, and in a speech which, by its fiery enthusiasm and its ardent patriotism, held his audience spell-bound, he proceeded to lay before the house the grievances and demands of the Irish nation. "I now address a free people," he said; "ages have passed away, and this is the first moment in which you could be distinguished by that appellation. I have spoken on the subject of your liberty so often, that I have nothing to add, and have only to admire by what Heaven-directed steps you have proceeded, until the whole nation is braced up to the act of her own deliverance. I found Ireland on her knees; I watched over her with a paternal solicitude; I have traced her progress from injuries to arms, and from arms to liberty. Spirit of Swift! Spirit of

¹ Comp. "Life of Grattan," pp. 216-224; Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," pp. 212-220, where the letters of Rockingham and Fox to Charlemont are given, as well as the latter's replies.

Molyneux! Your genius has prevailed! Ireland is now a nation! In that new character I hail her, and bowing to her august presence, I say, "*Esto perpetua!*" He proceeded to eulogise the Parliament for the efforts it had made for the attainment of the country's freedom, and commended the unanimity which had prevailed in the land; Catholics and Protestants, town and country, had united in order, with one voice, to demand the restitution of their rights. He then, with great moderation and discretion, adverted to the services which the volunteers had rendered on behalf of the nation's cause; he praised the enthusiasm with which the upper classes, the landowners, had joined the league; but above all, he extolled the loyalty and self-restraint which the people had shown in refraining from all clamour against England, as well as in remaining unmoved by the blandishments of France.

Finally, he laid particular stress on the indissoluble nature of the union with England, and described the Crown and the free constitution as the links of a chain cast about the two lands, binding them in a close relationship; and concluded by moving an address to the king, which especially recognised the inseparableness of the bond existing between the two countries, but, at the same time, demanded the legislative independence of the Irish state. There were three things which more than all else had produced discontent in the country: the British Act of Parliament, passed in the reign of George I., which conferred upon the English Parliament the right to make binding laws for Ireland; the amended Poyning's law, which rendered all Irish bills nugatory without the assent of the English Privy Council; and the perpetual Mutiny Act (p. 210). The nation was compelled to require the abolition of these laws. The address concluded by calling attention to the fact that the people of Ireland had never expressed a wish to share the liberties enjoyed by England without, at the same time, announcing their determination to share England's fortune,—“to stand or fall with the British nation.”¹ The address was carried with remarkable

¹ See Grattan's “Speeches,” i. pp. 122–130.

unanimity, and individuals who subsequently acted a very different part in the history of Ireland, at that time did not venture to oppose themselves to the strong tide of national enthusiasm which had then set in.

In order to allow the British ministry time for deliberation, the Irish Parliament, immediately after these proceedings, adjourned until the 4th of May. It is evident from the despatches of the lord-lieutenant to Shelburne, secretary of state, that the functionaries of the Crown in Ireland regarded these large demands of the Irish with no favourable eye ; but on the other hand, the viceroy could not conceal from himself the fact that, in the excited state of the popular mind, it would be dangerous to reject any one of these demands. Portland was, therefore, anxious to arrive at a compromise ; and with this object he entered into communication with Grattan, and in conjunction with Shelburne, proposed that a commission, consisting of deputies from the English and Irish Parliaments, should be empowered to negotiate a kind of treaty of confederation, which should definitely fix the limits of independence ; the right of control in various matters, especially in commercial affairs, which would have to be retained by England ; the amount to be contributed by Ireland towards the expenses of the realm ; all of which questions were at present matters of uncertainty : this course being suggested as the only means of avoiding subsequent disputes between different portions of the kingdom.¹ Grattan, however, was utterly opposed to the notion of a treaty.² The Irish demanded their rights, and nothing but their rights ; and the nation could take no part in chaffering and bargaining : any negotiations with respect to the ultimatum which had been delivered by the Irish, could only arouse mistrust and suspicion in the minds of the people. Although the fears of the Irish were not altogether groundless, that in a transaction of this nature they might be at a disadvantage, Grattan's repugnance to these negotiations, never-

¹ Comp. extracts from the correspondence of Shelburne and Portland (Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. pp. 550, 551).

² See Grattan's letter to Day, dated the 22nd April, 1782 ("Life of Grattan," ii. pp. 249-252); also his communication to Fox of the 6th May, 1782 ("Life of Grattan," ii. p. 269).

theless, betrayed a certain political shortsightedness. It was just that very want of a definite treaty, added to the fact that the Crown was intended to constitute the sole link between two countries, each governed by its own Parliament, which proved the germ of those manifold complications which necessarily accrued from the task of attempting to bring into harmony the decrees of two divergent legislative bodies.

On the 17th May, 1782, resolutions were laid before the English Parliament—in the House of Lords by Shelburne, in the House of Commons by Fox,—which were destined to be the harbingers of peace to Ireland. The speech of Fox¹ on this occasion was especially significant. Starting from the position that discontented subjects are but little better than enemies, he passed in review the demands made by the Irish Parliament. Referring to the demand for the repeal of the Act of George I., it had always, he said, been looked upon as tyranny when any legislative body presumed to enact laws for those who had no representation in that assembly. On this ground he now advocated the abrogation of the law in question, which had only been productive of opposition and dissatisfaction. If, however, England renounced all legislative authority over Ireland, she must, as a natural consequence, also surrender the claim of the English House of Peers to be the final court of appeal for Ireland. Poyning's law, it is true, was a portion of the Irish constitution, but when it was considered that the English Privy Council had frequently suppressed bills which had been almost unanimously passed by both Houses of the Irish Parliament,—and when, on the other hand, it was remembered that certain bills had been supported in that Parliament merely as a means of snatching at popularity, it being a foregone conclusion that the English Privy Council would reject them,—and that thus the parliamentary representatives were, in a measure, relieved of their responsibility,—it was, he said, impossible to describe Poyning's law as a beneficent enactment. He concluded with a reference to the perpetual Mutiny Act, and remarked that if the English

¹ Fox, "Speeches," ii. pp. 59–66; also "Parliamentary History," xxiii. pp. 17–48.

watched over their annual Mutiny Bill with such jealous care, surely the Irish could not be blamed if they also claimed privileges similar to those enjoyed by their English neighbours. Fox was warmly seconded by Edmund Burke, who was enthusiastic in his advocacy of the claims put forward by his native land. He declared "the cause of Ireland was nearest his heart ; and he had always said to himself, that if such an insignificant member as he was could ever be so fortunate as to render an essential service to England, and that his Sovereign or Parliament were going to reward him for it, he would say to them, 'Do something for Ireland, do something for my country, and I am over-rewarded.'"¹ Such persuasions were, however, superfluous. So thoroughly was every one convinced of the necessity of arriving at some agreement with Ireland, that in the House of Commons the resolutions were carried unanimously, and in the House of Lords with only one dissentient,—Lord Loughborough.

When the Irish Parliament again met on the 27th May, 1782, the lord-lieutenant announced, in the speech from the throne, that the English legislature was disposed to remove the causes of the dissatisfaction and discontent at present existing in Ireland ; and that his majesty had, therefore, resolved to grant his assent to the Act to prevent the suppression of bills in the Privy Council, or anywhere else ; and also to the bill limiting the duration of the Mutiny Act. Immediately after the reading of the speech from the throne, Grattan rose and declared that Great Britain had now given up, *in toto*, every claim to legislate for Ireland ; and that it would be foolish on the part of Ireland, were she not to be satisfied with this, but were she to insist upon extorting from England the avowal that the right which she had formerly exercised she had arrogated to herself. He, therefore, moved an address which emphasized the loyal sentiments of the Irish people, and expressed their gratitude that the difficult problem had, at last, been solved ; while it, at the same time, contained the assurance that no constitutional question any longer existed

¹ Comp. Fox, "Speeches," ii. p. 66.

which would be capable of disturbing the harmony between the two nations. The address was carried in a full house with only two dissentients, and the king subsequently replied to it in a few gracious words.¹

After a long political struggle, Ireland had, thus, taken her place among the nations. United to the sister-country by the single bond of a common ruler and head, she had now obtained, by a peaceful and bloodless revolution, a form of Government which guaranteed to her legislative independence. The attainment of this object was mainly attributable to the exertions of Grattan, a man endowed, indeed, with the intellectual gifts of a Pericles, who, by his marvellous eloquence, succeeded in arousing an enthusiasm for lofty aims, even in the House of Commons, whose members were, as a rule, completely absorbed in their own personal interests ; while, on the other hand, he contrived, by his moderate and circumspect conduct, to restrain the excited masses of the volunteers from all dangerous and disloyal action. When, therefore, on this occasion, Mr. Bagenal, the member for Carlow, rose in the House of Commons, and moved that a national gratuity be presented to Grattan, the proposal was received with general applause. Grattan, at first, declined this offer, but at the instance of his most intimate friends, he decided to accept half of the sum granted by Parliament. From this time he resigned his legal practice, and devoted himself entirely to the service of his country.²

¹ The lord-lieutenant's speech from the throne, together with Grattan's speech and the address of the Parliament, is printed in Grattan's "Speeches," i. pp. 131-137.

² See "Life of Grattan," ii. pp. 304, 305 ; also "Speeches," i. p. 138 *et seq.*

CHAPTER XII.

THE FIRST YEARS OF IRISH INDEPENDENCE, UNTIL THE PERIOD AT WHICH THE INFLUENCE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION BEGAN TO BE FELT IN IRELAND (1791).

WHEN the Irish Parliament asserted, on the 27th May, 1782, that no constitutional question could ever again arise to interrupt the harmony subsisting between the two countries, it gave an assurance, in the intoxication of its joy, which it was beyond its power to substantiate. To every one who observes the institutions of Ireland more closely, it must be evident, that in the newly created order of things, as well as in the remains of that which previously existed, there lay concealed the germs of future conflicts. The scandalous pension list, which demanded the application of Irish funds for the benefit of English pensioners, still flourished, the employment of patronage and open corruption continued unabated, and electoral reform was a thing as yet unthought of. By far the greater number of the population, including all the Catholics, were debarred from the exercise of the franchise, as well as from every other political privilege ; and it could scarcely be expected that the section of the people which composed, not, as in England, a small minority, but, on the contrary, constituted an overwhelming majority of the nation, should remain permanently quiet under these conditions. The want of clearly defined stipulations with regard to the existing relations between the two countries was already beginning to be felt ; and this deficiency naturally increased the difficulties experienced in the endeavour to bring into unison the legislation of both lands ; especially when, as was frequently the case, the interests of the two countries were antagonistic. It must

be admitted, too, that the new form of Government was surrounded by many dangers, and that Burke was right when, unmoved by the prevailing tumult of joy, he looked calmly into the future, and wrote to his friend Charlemont, "I see with concern that there are some remains of ferment in Ireland, though, I think, we have poured in, to assuage it, almost all the oil in our stores."¹

For the present, it is true, the Irish Parliament found ample occupation in attending to its own immediate affairs, for it was of the first importance that the newly acquired constitution should be brought into regular shape and order. Bills were accordingly passed which formally rescinded the perpetual Mutiny Act, and Poyning's law ; another enactment established the supreme court of judicature and guaranteed the independence of the judges, which, as we have seen, had been a long-standing demand of the national party. A bill was also passed designed to secure freedom of election, to which end certain Government officials were deprived of the franchise.²

Moreover, the measures for the relief of the Catholics which had been brought in by Gardiner in 1781, but which, owing to a change of administration, did not pass through committee (p. 216), were, in 1782, re-introduced. On this occasion the author of the proposal deemed it advisable to submit them in the form of three separate bills. The first of these aimed at legalising marriages between Protestants and Catholics ; the second provided that on taking the oath of allegiance, Catholics should be entitled to become tutors and schoolmasters ; the third bill was intended to abolish the enactments which imposed restrictions on the sale and purchase of land, as well as to remove the vexatious and oppressive regulations to which Catholics were still subjected ; the prohibition, for instance, which prevented a Catholic residing in Limerick or Galway, or owning a horse exceeding £5 in value ; it was also intended to do away with the decree requiring the registration

¹ In a letter to Charlemont, printed in Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," p. 261.

² See Irish Statutes, 21 and 22 George III., c. 43, 47, 48, 49, 50.

of priests, as well as the penal statutes against the solemn celebration of the mass. The last two bills became law,¹ but the first bill, which related to mixed marriages, was frustrated by the obstinacy of the majority in the Irish Parliament, who imagined they saw in the measure a danger to the Established Church. On the same ground, they considered it their duty to renew the penal enactments against the public celebration of divine worship according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church; as also against proselytism, and apostacy to the Catholic faith.² But sparingly as right and justice were dispensed to the Catholics, they, nevertheless, gladly accepted what was offered to them, and in an address to the lord-lieutenant, assured him of their gratitude and loyalty.³

For the present, therefore, the Catholics were quiet and contented; but so quickly did the omission to secure clear and definite terms of agreement avenge itself, that in the very first year of the existence of the new constitution, the happy relations between England and Ireland were considerably disturbed by a controversy, known in history as that of "Simple Repeal." Flood maintained that it was not sufficient that England had simply abnegated all claim to the authority which she had formerly exercised over Ireland; inasmuch as any future British Government would be able to reassert this claim; and that, therefore, it was Ireland's duty to demand from England an express renunciation of all legislative rights. He accordingly moved, in the House of Commons, that the opinion of all the Irish judges be taken on the question, whether or not the abrogation of the Act of George I. implied the abrogation, for all time, of the rights claimed by that Act. With great energy he advocated the view that it was necessary to insist upon a direct and formal renunciation of all such rights; and closed with the pathetic words: "Were the voice with which I now utter this the last effort of expiring nature; were the accent which conveys it to you the breath that was to waft me to the grave to which we all tend, and to

¹ Irish Statutes, 21 and 22 George III., c. 24, 62.

² Comp. Lecky, *loc. cit.*, iv. p. 556.

³ Printed in the "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 309.

which my footsteps rapidly accelerate, I would go on ; I would make my exit by a loud demand for your rights ; and I call upon the God of truth and liberty, who has so often favoured you, and who has of late looked down upon you with such a peculiar grace and glory of protection, to continue to you His inspirations, to crown you with the spirit of His completion, and to assist you against the errors of those that are honest, as well as against the machinations of those that are not." Grattan opposed the motion. It was his opinion, that if, at the very moment in which England had withdrawn all her claims, the Irish persisted in demanding a formal renunciation of the same, it would betray a defiant and suspicious spirit, and would be productive of ill-will between the two countries. He had always striven to procure liberty for the people ; but it had invariably been by methods which were attended with as little danger as possible. Flood desired to persuade the country that it had been deceived, and that he was the only person competent to defend the constitution. In advancing this view of the question, Grattan met with the approval of the House, and, consequently, Flood's motion was lost.¹

The matter was, however, not disposed of ; on the contrary, owing to the action of the English Parliament, it entered upon a fresh stage. On the 5th July, 1782, Lord Abingdon laid before the British legislature a motion, which declared that the sole and exclusive right to legislate for the dependencies of the British Crown was vested in the English Parliament.² Although the motion was rejected by the House of Lords with great decision, it, nevertheless, aroused considerable ill-will in Ireland ; and in consideration of this circumstance, Flood reintroduced his motion on the 19th July in a somewhat modified form ; but it was again defeated by a resolu-

¹ For the question of "Simple Repeal," the speeches delivered by Grattan on the 14th and 19th of June, and on the 23rd July, 1782, are especially important ("Speeches," i. pp. 143, 144, 166, 168-172). In the Appendix to the same work, pp. 301-322, Flood's speeches on the 11th and 14th of June are also given.

² See Lecky's "Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland" (Ger. trans.), p. 85.

tion brought forward by Grattan, which protested that the exclusive right of the Irish Parliament to legislate for Ireland had already been fully, adequately, and irrevocably acknowledged, and that, therefore, Flood's motion was inopportune.

The parliamentary majority was, accordingly, decided in its adoption of Grattan's opinion ; but the mass of the people, and especially the volunteers, supported Flood, whose views on the subject of a formal renunciation were also shared by the legal profession.¹ And so it came to pass, in a remarkable manner, that Grattan's popularity, which had attained an almost incredible height, began to decline, while Flood, who had long been the object of distrust and suspicion, was once more raised high on the surging billows of popular favour.

Meanwhile, in consequence of the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, which occurred on the 1st July, 1782, a considerable change took place in the constitution of the Cabinet. Shelburne became first lord of the treasury ; Fox resigned his office ; and the Duke of Portland was succeeded in the lord-lieutenancy by Earl Temple. Flood's opinions found a powerful supporter in the new viceroy, who considered it but reasonable that England should make a formal renunciation of those rights which she had actually surrendered ; and accordingly, on the 22nd January, 1783, Townshend, secretary of state, introduced a motion in the English House of Commons² which removed all doubt on the subject, and recognised the legislative rights of the Irish Parliament, and the independence of the Irish courts of law. After animated debates, this motion was carried early in the year, and by this means the controversy on the question of "Simple Repeal" was finally settled.

With the object, in some measure, of flattering the national pride of the Irish, and thus attaching the Irish nation more closely to the ruling dynasty, the king, towards the close of the year 1782, resolved to create a special Irish Order,—the

¹ The opinion of the lawyers will be found in the "Life of Grattan," ii. p. 357.

² Comp. Adolphus, *loc. cit.*, vol. iii. p. 469.

Order of St. Patrick,—whose grand master should be the reigning viceroy, and whose chancellor should be the Archbishop of Dublin. This project produced unbounded satisfaction in Irish circles. The founding of an Irish Order was regarded by the Irish as a symbol of their newly acquired independence, and when, in the beginning of February, 1783, Lord Charlemont and other Irish peers were invested with the insignia of the Order, the ceremony was conducted with great pomp.¹

The supreme want of the country, after its constitutional conflicts, was a stable Administration, whose members should be well acquainted with the condition of Irish affairs ; but unfortunately, at no period of Ireland's history were changes in the Irish Government more frequent than just at this time. Thus, Lord Temple's term of office was but of short duration ; for when, in April, the coalition ministry of Fox and North was formed, he resigned his post, and was succeeded by Northington, an eminent Whig nobleman, who owed his appointment to this dignity mainly to the influence of Fox ; hence, he established direct relations with the national party, and appointed Grattan and Charlemont members of the Privy Council.

During the administration of Northington, the antagonism between the parliamentary majority and the volunteers, which had already manifested itself on the question of Simple Repeal, became more pronounced. It was a generally accepted opinion among members of the Commons, that so long as the volunteers were content with the honour of preserving the internal tranquility of the country, and defending it from foreign foes, they were worthy of all praise ; but that with the close of the war their mission had ended ; and that now, since they had transformed themselves into debating societies, their influence was rather dangerous than beneficial. The volunteers, on the other hand, maintained that every concession relating to the internal policy of the country, which had been wrung from England, was chiefly owing to their action, and not to

¹ See Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," pp. 244-247.

that of the Parliament ; they held, therefore, that it would be dishonourable on their part to lay down their arms so long as there was yet hope of gaining any further advantages for the nation. At the same time, they in a measure changed front, and now began to direct their attacks against the Parliament itself, on the ground that its members were elected according to an antiquated electoral system, and were, in a large proportion, dependent on the Castle, and, in some cases, directly in its pay ; and that, instead of being popular representatives, they were in the habit of betraying the interests of the country. With this evil the volunteers, among whom the democratic element was becoming very largely developed, felt themselves called upon to grapple ; and, hence, parliamentary reform constituted their latest watchword.¹

They entered upon this new task with great eagerness. Committees were formed on every hand, and large meetings for the discussion of the question were held, which were attended by delegates from the various associations. The most important of these gatherings was the one held in Dungannon on the 8th September, 1783, at which delegates from 269 military organizations were present. In the form of sundry resolutions, this assembly declared its determination to maintain popular freedom ; expressed its dissatisfaction with the existing constitution of the House of Commons ; and pledged its word to use every endeavour to obtain a better representation. It was also decided at this meeting that, in order to afford an opportunity for the full discussion of the reform question, a convention should assemble in Dublin, on the 10th November, 1783, to consist of delegates from the collective volunteer corps of the land, of whom five should be elected by ballot from each county.

The volunteers thus proclaimed war against the legislature, as it was then constituted ; but Parliament hesitated long before accepting the challenge, hoping that by gracious and conciliatory action it would be able to disarm the hostility of its adversaries. Accordingly, when Parliament assembled on

¹ For this matter refer especially to Hardy, *loc. cit.*, p. 258 *et seq.* ; also Adolphus, iv. pp. 144-146.

the 14th October, 1783, immediately after the voting of the address in reply to the speech from the throne, Lord Sudley¹ moved that the thanks of the House be presented to the volunteers for the prompt assistance which they had rendered to the civil magistracy, as well as for the courageous efforts they had made in defence of the country; and the motion was carried without a dissentient voice. That the legislative assembly, however, should pass a vote of thanks to the volunteers at the precise moment when its very existence was being threatened by them, was undoubtedly a remarkable proceeding; and, as was only natural, it was construed by the volunteers as an indication of weakness and incapacity, and, as such, only tended to strengthen them in their purpose.

The early days of this session of Parliament witnessed the completion of the breach between Grattan and Flood, the rival leaders of the House of Commons. The relations between these Dirosuri of the Irish legislature had been cooling for a considerable time. The Liberals in the House of Commons had long regarded Flood with suspicion, and looked upon him as a renegade, in consequence of his acceptance of high office during Harcourt's administration. Flood, on his part, could not forget that he had been supplanted by Grattan, a man much younger than himself, and that from having been the most prominent member of the House, he was now forced to occupy but a secondary position; while Grattan, on the other hand, felt himself aggrieved that, by his alliance with the volunteers on the Repeal question, Flood threatened to rob him of his own popularity in the country. It needed, therefore, but a slight cause to transform the small rift into an open breach; and this occasion² presented itself on the 28th October, 1783, when Grattan made an assault on Flood for the part he had taken in the administrations of Harcourt and Buckinghamshire. In the course of his speech he made an allusion to Flood's illness, which, it must be owned, betrayed a singular

¹ See Grattan's "Speeches," i. p. 174; *Adolphus*, iv. p. 146.

² Concerning the controversy between Grattan and Flood, see Grattan's "Speeches," i. pp. 176-185.

want of delicacy ; whereupon Flood rose in high wrath, and in keen and cutting language attacked Grattan on the score of his political action ; reproaching him for his attitude on the subject of Repeal, and taunting him with the gift presented to him by the nation. “ I am not,” he cried, “ the author of Simple Repeal ; I am not one who, after saying the Parliament was a Parliament of prostitutes, endeavoured to make their voices subservient to my own interests. I am not the gentleman who subsists on your accounts. I am not the mendicant patriot who was bought by his country for a sum of money, and sold his country for prompt payment.” Grattan replied to this onslaught in a passionate and crushing speech, which was full of biting sarcasm and delivered with indescribable emotion, and in which he sketched the political life of his assailant in the darkest colours. He not only upbraided him with having remained so many years silent in Parliament, but here, before the tribunal of the nation, he branded him as the author of all the unpopular Government measures passed during the period in which he filled the office of vice-president of the treasury. He was especially severe on him for having supported the proposal to send 4,000 men to America (p. 187). “ The right hon. member called these butchers ‘ armed negotiators ’ ” he cried in bitter scorn, “ and stood with a metaphor in his mouth and a bribe in his pocket, a champion against the rights of America, the only hope of Ireland and the only refuge of the liberties of mankind.” Having, in this strain, portrayed his rival, in caricature it is true, he concluded with the following words : “ Such has been your conduct, and at such conduct every order of your fellow-subjects has a right to exclaim. The merchant may say to you—the constitutionalist may say to you—the American may say to you—and I, I now say, and say to your beard, ‘ Sir, you are not an honest man ! ’ ” After such a conflict of words, which may be likened to the dispute between Eschines and Demosthenes, or to that between Fox and Burke, the rupture between Grattan and Flood was complete.

On the 10th November, 1783, the delegates from the collective volunteer corps of Ireland, consisting, for the most part,

of men of rank and high position, assembled in convention,¹ as arranged, in the Rotunda, Dublin. It soon became evident that there were two parties in this gathering, the more moderate of which desired to elect as president its old and tried leader, the Earl of Charlemont; while the other, and more radical party, had selected as president-elect an Irish bishop, Frederick, Earl of Bristol, Bishop of Derry, a man of eminent intellectual gifts, but none the less a political adventurer, without any of the virtues with which a high dignitary of the Church is generally accredited.² Excessively vain and conceited, his one ambition was to take a leading part in politics; and seeing that all his efforts to obtain the vice-royalty were unavailing, he had now determined to espouse the cause of the Radical opposition. He had a considerable number of followers among the delegates, but they were not numerous enough to secure him the presidency of the convention, which was accordingly conferred on Lord Charlemont.

Although there was a perfect unanimity in this assembly as to the necessity for reform, there was a vast difference of opinion as to the methods to be employed for its accomplishment. The Bishop of Derry and his followers were especially anxious to bestow the suffrage on Catholics, and to give them the right to vote at all parliamentary elections; but Charlemont and Flood were resolutely opposed to such a step. Both of these leaders, it is true, had always been willing to relax the severities of the penal laws against the Catholics, but they were, at the same time, strongly averse to conferring upon them political privileges, in which views they were supported by a large section of the convention. On the other hand, however, many of the delegates refused their sympathy to the motion of the Earl of Bristol, on account of the suspicions they entertained with regard to his disinterestedness; conse-

¹ The proceedings of the Rotunda Convention are related in detail by Hardy, *loc. cit.*, pp. 262-269.

² Lecky has given an admirable portrait of this man in his "Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland," p. 88; while a characteristic sketch of this prince of the Church, at a subsequent period of his life, has been supplied by Seume in his "Spaziergang nach Svrakus."

quently the bishop's motion in favour of the Catholics was lost, and Flood was commissioned to prepare and introduce to the House of Commons a reform bill, one of the main provisions of which should be the continued exclusion of the Catholics from the franchise.

Apart from this harsh condition, Flood's bill was a decided step in advance. In the first place, it provided "that every Protestant freeholder or leaseholder for a certain term of years, of forty shillings value, resident in any city or borough, should be entitled to vote at the election of a member for the same." It further provided that all recipients of pensions should be excluded from parliament; that insignificant boroughs be disfranchised; and that the duration of parliament be reduced to three years; while, in order to diminish bribery and corruption, it proposed that every newly elected member should be required to declare, on oath, that he had not been guilty of bribery in connection with his election.¹

Such were the proposals which Flood laid before the House of Commons on the 29th November, 1783. He made his appearance in the house attired in the uniform of the volunteers, and the pride which swelled his heart in the consciousness that to him had been assigned the elaboration of a reform bill, and the position of its advocate in the House, was evidenced by the fire in his eye and the enthusiasm with which his speech was pervaded. But the temper of Parliament was but little favourable to his scheme, his principal opponent being Yelverton, who at that time filled the office of attorney-general. Speaking of the bill, he said: "For I will say, if it originates with an armed body, 'tis inconsistent with the freedom of debate for this House to receive it. We sit not here to register the edicts of another assembly, or to receive propositions at the point of the bayonet. I admire the volunteers so long as they confine themselves to their first line of conduct. It was their glory to preserve the domestic peace of their country and to render it formidable to foreign enemies,—it was their glory to aid the civil magistrate and to

¹ Comp. Lecky, "Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland," p. 91.

support their Parliament ; but when they turn aside from this honourable conduct, when they form themselves into a debating society, and with that rude instrument, the bayonet, probe and explore a constitution which requires the nicest hand to touch, I own my respect and veneration for them is destroyed. If it be avowed that this bill originated with them, I will reject it at once, because I consider that it decides the question whether the House or the convention are the representatives of the people ; and whether Parliament or the volunteers are to be obeyed." At the conclusion of his speech, he again adverted to the volunteers in these terms : "But I will say to the volunteers, You shall not throw from you the blessings you may possess under your happy constitution ; cultivate your own prosperity, and enjoy the fruits of your virtue ; beat your swords into ploughshares ; return to your different occupations, and leave the business of legislation in those hands where the laws have placed it." Hereupon Flood replied with irritation, that he had presented his bill without any reference to the volunteers, and he asked the House if it were disposed to accept the bill at his hands. Although he had not introduced the volunteers into the debate, still, if they were aspersed, he was prepared to defend them against the whole world. He recounted their services ; how they had protected the country from foreign invasion, liberated commerce, and won for the nation the constitution of 1782 ; and pointed out how absurd it would be now, to assail as enemies these liberators of the land, to whom Parliament had but recently offered its thanks. Flood's arguments were, however, of little avail. Although he was supported by eminent speakers, among others by Grattan, who was too upright to sacrifice the cause of his country to private pique, his motion was rejected by 157 votes to 49, and a resolution, expressing the determination of the House to defend its rights and privileges against all assaults, of whatever nature, was moved by Yelverton, and accepted by the House.¹

The issue of these proceedings naturally produced intense

¹ Adolphus, iv. p. 148 ; also Grattan's "Speeches," i. pp. 191-195.

excitement among the volunteers ; and it was only owing to the moderation of Charlemont that excesses were avoided. Fresh resolutions were passed by this body, which strongly emphasized the necessity for parliamentary reform, and recommended the delegates to enter into a league with the freeholders of the counties, for the promotion of the reforms which had been suggested by the convention. It was also resolved to present an address to the king, which should give expression to the nation's desire for a more efficient representation.¹ Flood was commissioned to present this address to the monarch at a levee, an occasion which, with the opportunities it offered, enabled him to realize his long-cherished plan of entering the British Parliament. Through the influence of the Duke of Chandos he obtained a seat in the House of Commons, in whose proceedings he first took part during the discussion on Fox's India Bill ; but, not being familiar with the taste of the English Parliament, and being also insufficiently acquainted with the subject under discussion, his first appearance was a complete failure. Grattan justly remarked with reference to this incident : " He forgot that he was an oak of the forest, too great and too old to be transplanted at fifty."²

As is well known, the India Bill occasioned the fall of the coalition ministry of Fox and North, an event which led to important changes in the administration of Ireland. Lord Northington retired from the viceroyalty on the 4th January, 1784 ; his successor in this lofty post being the Duke of Rutland, a nobleman of amiable qualities but of limited experience. Under his administration the volunteers renewed the reform agitation, and in pursuance of this object, petitions in favour of reform were presented in the House of Commons from twenty-six counties. In consequence of this action of the counties, Flood, who, shortly after his rhetorical discomfiture in the English Parliament, had returned to Ire-

¹ Hardy's "Life of Charlemont," pp. 271, 272.

² For Flood's parliamentary *intermezzo* in England, comp. Lecky, *loc. cit.*, p. 97. Grattan's comment upon it will be found in the "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 169.

land, re-introduced, on the 13th March, 1784, his measure of the previous year;¹ but, as was the case in the first instance, the fact of its having emanated from an armed organization was urged against it as an objection which necessitated its rejection. More essentially important were the grounds upon which, on March 18th, Bushe opposed a motion made by Flood, that the measure be referred to a committee. The abolition of various boroughs which was intended by Flood's scheme, appeared to him to be a subversion of acquired and inherited rights; that provision of the bill which conferred the franchise on forty-shilling freeholders seemed to him to be a destruction of all true liberty, inasmuch as it prejudiced the rights of all such persons as might, by commerce, have attained to a condition of prosperity, which is the real source of independence. Grattan again supported the motion, although he did not wholly agree with some of the provisions of the bill; while he particularly pointed out that the reform advocated was virtually only a return to the first principles of electoral representation, which, owing to the corruption and rottenness of the boroughs, had been lost sight of in more recent times. But, notwithstanding this warm advocacy, Flood's motion was again defeated by 159 votes to 89. In order to secure the rejection of the measure, the borough-mongers, fearing the loss of their influence, had, as in the previous year, allied themselves with those members of the House who formed the independent section, and who opposed the motion on the ground of its being the work of the volunteers.

The next matter which occupied the attention of the legislature in 1784, and which was of secondary importance only to parliamentary reform, was the condition of the country in its economic relations. The effect of the non-importation agitation had naturally been transient; in a very short time English goods were again in general use, and owing to the removal of almost all the restrictions on commerce, Ireland was now, more than ever, deluged with English productions. In view of this competition, Irish manufacturers became alarmed, and

¹ For Flood's second Reform Bill, see Adolphus, iv. p. 150 *et seq.*; also "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 204.

accordingly began to besiege Parliament with petitions praying for the protection of native industry, by the imposition of duties upon all foreign goods, among which English manufactures were to be reckoned. In order to lend urgency to this demand, a considerable number of workmen were discharged, who now, without bread and without employment, formed a dangerous element in the streets of the capital.

On the 2nd April, 1784, the distress prevailing in the country became the subject of discussion in the House of Commons, and a resolution was moved, which alleged the continual increase in the imports as the cause of the growing poverty and distress of the land, and demanded the intervention of Parliament for the protection of native manufactures. But although many voices were raised in favour of a protective tariff, which would assuredly have inaugurated a fiscal conflict between England and Ireland, it was resolved to adjourn further consideration of this question to the next session.¹

This result occasioned a very serious disturbance of the peace in the capital. Irritated as the masses of the people already were by the repeated rejection of the reform bill, and excited, in some measure, by the appeals of the democratic press, this refusal to impose protective duties on foreign goods produced, on the 5th April, 1784, a dangerous rising among the working classes of Dublin, who had been anticipating as the result of this measure, more work, higher wages and, in short, a general improvement in their social condition. Large bodies of the populace forced their way into the House of Parliament, and several of the ringleaders were arrested by the sergeant-at-arms.²

The interior of the country, too, was again disturbed by the appearance of the Whiteboys, who committed atrocious cruelties, and among other barbarities, tarred and feathered their victims, in imitation of the atrocities practised by the North American Indians. The Catholic clergy were, however, so

¹ "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 232 *et seq.*; Adolphus, iv. p. 155.

² Comp. "Plowden's Historical Review," ii. p. 95; also Adolphus, vol. iv. p. 152.

energetic in their determination to suppress these outrages, that the chief secretary was deputed to convey the express thanks of the Government to one of their number, Dr. Troy, the Catholic Bishop of Ossory, for his decided action against this secret organization.¹

Meanwhile, various Radical associations were being formed in the capital, among the leaders of which we find the Radical member of Parliament, Lord Newenham, the demagogue, Napper Tandy, and also the Earl of Bristol. The latter had expressly declared, through the medium of a pamphlet, that the ultimate aim of this movement was the complete separation of Ireland from England. In June, 1784, accordingly, in conjunction with some of his compatriots, he issued a notice to all the sheriffs in Ireland, requesting them to summon meetings in their districts for the discussion of the reform question; and, at the same time, invited them to send delegates to a national congress to be held in Dublin, in October, 1784, which it was intended should form a species of revolutionary opposition parliament. The majority of these functionaries, however, paid no heed to this presumptuous request; the only one who responded to the invitation being the Sheriff of Dublin, for which he received condign punishment at the instance of Fitzgibbon, the new and energetic attorney-general.²

The national congress which had been announced to take place was opened in October, 1784, but the attendance of delegates was small; while the Earl of Bristol, and many of its most prominent promoters failed to appear. Flood took a share in the early part of the proceedings; but, annoyed that the reform scheme which he submitted to the consideration of the congress was rejected *a limine*, owing to the absence, in its provisions, of any proposal to confer the franchise on the Catholics, this politician withdrew from its deliberations. Notwithstanding its daily dwindling numbers, the assembly dragged on its proceedings during three days, at the end of

¹ Plowden, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 107.

² For the action taken against the Sheriff of Dublin, see "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 208 *et seq.*; for the National Congress, *ibid.*, iii. p. 211.

which it dispersed without having achieved any result whatever.

This was the last act in the political life of the volunteers, and all subsequent attempts to reanimate this institution were ineffectual. The convention was dissolved, and the several detachments in the various counties, under the command of unimportant personages, soon lost all consequence.

Meanwhile, complaints respecting the decline of Irish commerce were still rife, in consequence of which Pitt, the English premier, was impelled to take the subject into serious consideration. But the mind of the young statesman was deeply imbued with the teachings of Adam Smith ; and the conclusions at which he arrived with regard to the commercial crisis differed widely from the opinions entertained by the politicians of Ireland, to whom a protective tariff appeared to be the panacea for all their troubles. Pitt believed that Irish commerce could be most effectually aided, not by the systematic exclusion of English productions, but rather, as he wrote to the Duke of Portland¹ on the 7th October, 1784, by allowing to Ireland, as far as possible, an absolute and unlimited participation in the mercantile privileges enjoyed by the mother-country ; only asking in return compliance with the single condition, that Ireland should contribute to the common necessities of the realm, and that thus the mother-country should reap the advantage of Ireland's wealth and prosperity. Entertaining these views, he entered into negotiations with Foster, the Irish chancellor, and Orde, the Irish secretary of state, with the result that on the 11th January, 1785, eleven resolutions were drawn up which it was determined to lay before the Parliaments of both lands.²

The main drift of these resolutions was to the effect that all the products of foreign countries should be allowed to pass over Ireland to Great Britain, and from Great Britain to Ireland, without the payment of any additional duty ; that in

¹ See the letter in Earl Stanhope's "Life of the Right Hon. William Pitt" (Lond., 1861), vol. i. p. 264, a work which is of primary importance for the period which follows.

² Printed in Plowden's "Historical Review," ii. p. 113 *et seq.*

those cases in which a difference had existed in the rate of duty imposed by the two countries on certain imported articles, the lower scale should be adopted by both ; and that finally, as compensation for these mercantile advantages, when the revenue of Ireland exceeded £656,000, the surplus should go toward the maintenance of the imperial navy.

In Ireland these proposals originally evoked but slight opposition : they were carried without difficulty in both Houses, and on the 22nd February, 1785, were submitted to the English Parliament.

On this occasion Pitt enunciated his views on the subject to the House of Commons¹ in an eminently statesmanlike speech, which commanded the admiration even of his opponents. Between countries bearing the relation to each other which was borne by England and Ireland, there were, he held, only two commercial systems possible. Either the weaker country must be in a position of complete subjection to the stronger one, or there must exist a community of advantages, an arrangement founded on equity and justice, whose aim should be to promote the interests of both countries, without any thought of aggrandizing one or of abasing the other. It was such a system, implying, it is true, an equal distribution of burdens, which, in order to preserve the kingdom from further disintegration, and to unite its various parts into an inseparable whole, he was now anxious to adopt ; and he, therefore, proposed to grant to Ireland, on condition that she engaged to contribute of her surplus to the expenditure of the united kingdom, a perpetual and irrevocable interest in all the commercial privileges and advantages enjoyed by England.

But Pitt's propositions were very unfavourably received by the population of the manufacturing towns. Lamentations were heard on all hands, and a petition was presented in the House of Commons,² signed by 80,000 workpeople in Lancashire alone, which set forth that the admission of Irish

¹ See Earl Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," i. p. 267 ; comp. also "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 247 *et seq.*

² Adolphus, iv. (ed. 1810), pp. 158, 159 ; "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 248.

cotton goods into England would destroy the English cotton trade, and ruin English manufacturers.

Notwithstanding this opposition, however, Pitt introduced his measure in a somewhat modified form, on the 12th May. Instead of eleven resolutions, there were now twenty ; and an important alteration provided that such Navigation Acts as, in the interests of the navy, should be deemed necessary by the English Government, should be invested with the force of law for Ireland. Moreover, yielding to popular pressure, Irish commerce was excluded from those territories to which the chartered privileges of the East India Company extended.¹

Meanwhile, the parliamentary opposition, under the leadership of Fox and North, were fully prepared to take advantage of the current which had now set in against Pitt in the centres of industry, in order to compass the downfall of this statesman ; and they, accordingly, employed all their tactics for the purpose of obtaining a majority against Pitt's proposals. It was prophesied by some that, owing to the cheapness of Irish labour, English manufacturers would be driven out of the market ; others asserted that, in view of the decline which had taken place in the revenues of that country, Ireland would never be in a position to pay the stipulated contribution towards the expenses of the navy ; while, on the other hand, there were some who regarded the measure as an attack upon the liberties of Ireland. The majority of the House, however, remained true to its prime minister, and his proposals were carried in the House of Commons on the 30th May ; and on the 7th June they were laid before the House of Lords, where they were virtually unopposed.²

But the real difficulties of the question now began to be apparent. On May 21st, Pitt wrote to the lord-lieutenant :³ “ Do not imagine because we have had two triumphant divisions, that we have everything before us. We have an inde-

¹ The twenty resolutions are printed in Plowden, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 120 *et seq.*

² For the proceedings in the English Parliament, see Adolphus, iv. pp. 160, 161 ; “ Life of Grattan,” iii. pp. 254, 255.

³ Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 271.

fatigable enemy, sharpened by disappointment, watching and improving every opportunity." With these words he accurately described the situation. The fact that the English Government had introduced so many alterations with regard to the eleven resolutions, which had already been accepted by the Irish Parliament, had produced considerable irritation in Ireland, which the Whig opposition in England skilfully contrived to aggravate. In the course of the debate in the English Parliament, on May 30th, several speeches were made which appeared to be especially addressed to Ireland ; and Fox himself concluded with the words : "I will not barter English commerce for Irish slavery ; that is not the price I would pay, nor is this the thing I would purchase" ; an appeal which necessarily could not fail of its effect upon the Irish.¹

The twenty resolutions, therefore, did not meet with that approbation in Ireland which the lord-lieutenant had anticipated. On the 4th July, he wrote to Pitt² that Grattan appeared to be absolutely unapproachable ; and when on the 12th August, Orde, the Irish secretary laid the measure in its modified form before the House of Commons, the mutilations it had undergone aroused violent indignation ; while some of its provisions, as the demand for a perpetual contribution towards the revenue of England, and the one requiring that the Irish Navigation Acts be altered so as to accord with the English Acts, were characterised by Grattan as a direct insult to Ireland. When, therefore, on the 30th August, after an animated discussion, the vote was taken on the first reading of the bill, the majority in favour of the resolutions was only eighteen. If this scant majority was all that the Government proposals were able to command in their earliest stage, it was not difficult to foresee, that before the measure had passed through committee, it must have suffered a complete defeat ; and as this was a catastrophe which the Government was not anxious to invite, Pitt withdrew his bill on the 15th August,

¹ Comp. "Parliamentary History," xxv. p. 778 ; Adolphus, iv. p. 161.

² See Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, p. i. 273.

1785, the news of which proceeding produced unbounded joy in the Irish capital.¹

Such was the issue of these transactions, which demand special notice, in so far as they constitute the first attempt of the two Parliaments to exercise their united functions, subsequent to the establishment of an independent legislature in Ireland. As we have seen, this trial of the new legislative machinery did not prove very successful. The difficulties in the way of governing the United Kingdom by means of two rival and independent Parliaments were here presented in the strongest possible light; and from this time it became the aim of English statesmen to bring about a union of the two legislative assemblies.

It was Pitt's intention to lay before the Irish Parliament a similar bill in the following year; but, as the information he received from his friends in Ireland gave him little hope of obtaining a more favourable result, he was compelled to relinquish his cherished scheme of placing Ireland and the mother-country, as concerned their commercial relations, on a footing of perfect equality.² The parliamentary session of the year 1786 was, accordingly, marked by no events of particular importance. In default of more promising objects, the opposition contented itself with renewing its attacks on the rapidly growing pension list, which had gradually swollen to the amount of £96,000; without, however, being able to effect any change in connection with this much-vexed question.

About this time agrarian tumults again broke out in the south of Ireland, which were mainly due to the evils attendant on the tithes system, to which we have already adverted (p. 163). In Munster, secret societies once more made their appearance, whose members were bound by an oath and professed allegiance to one mysterious head, in this case Captain Right by name. These disturbances speedily attracted the attention of the English prime minister. On the 7th Novem-

¹ For the proceedings in the Irish Parliament, see "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 258; *Adolphus iv.*, p. 162.

² Comp. Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 287.

ber, 1786, Pitt wrote to Rutland, the lord-lieutenant,¹ that the enforced payment of tithes was a great obstacle to the prosperity of any country ; and he had, accordingly, conceived another method of levying tithes, especially adapted to the case of Ireland ; but apprehensive lest by meddling with this question, which closely touched the interests of the Anglican clergy, he might bring a hornet's nest about his ears, he had decided for the present to postpone this measure of reform.

But while thus delaying the introduction of preventive measures, the Government brought in a bill, early in 1787, for the immediate suppression of agrarian outrage. The circumstances of the case, indeed, called for severe and vigorous measures ; nevertheless, the fact that it was not intended to limit the operation of this exceptional law to the disturbed districts, but that it was to be in force throughout the entire country, necessarily and justly excited violent and strenuous opposition. In addition to this, many members considered the penalties to be too severe ; but the greatest amount of irritation was aroused by the provision that, inasmuch as the majority of the rioters held their meetings in Catholic chapels, and there administered the oath to their associates, all those places of worship which had served this purpose should be demolished. Such an outrageous provision as this was rightly characterised as a grievous reversion to the system of penal laws ; and Grattan compared the whole bill to the Draconian code, which knew only one penalty—blood, blood, blood ! The action of the opposition, in the end, effected the removal of the obnoxious clause relating to the demolition of the chapels, after which the bill was carried.²

As the Government gave no indication of its intention to initiate legislation with regard to the tithe question, which really lay at the root of the agrarian disturbances, Grattan resolved to proceed in the matter on his own responsibility, and on the 13th March, 1787, he moved that at the beginning of the next session the House should take under its con-

¹ Stanhope, i. p. 318.

² For the Riot Bill consult Grattan's "Speeches," ii. pp. 1-8 ; Plowden ii. pp. 159-162.

sideration the subject of tithes, and elaborate a scheme of reform which, on the one hand, should have respect to the maintenance of the clergy, and on the other to the welfare of the people. In his speech, he pointed out that a law had been passed for the suppression of the outrages, but that the origin and cause of those disturbances had not been removed. It appeared to him that these outrages were chiefly to be attributed to the irritation produced by the tithe system, and that, in fact, a tithe payment of from eight to twelve shillings per annum was enormous for a poor cotter receiving a wage of sixpence per day. One special cause of dissatisfaction, however, in connection with this subject, was the unequal and capricious principle upon which tithes were levied. The wealthy grazier was exempted from all tithes, while the poor cottager was compelled to pay them. Whereas, in Connaught, the land used for the cultivation of potatoes was tithe free, in Munster—just those districts, therefore, in which the disturbances prevailed—tithes were exacted even from this beggarly article of food; and great was the sum of misery and wretchedness entailed upon the poor people by the tithe-collector alone, who, in extorting these taxes from them, drained, as it were, their very life-blood. Such were the views which Grattan presented to Parliament, but the majority of the House declined to accept his proposals. The Irish secretary refused to recognise tithes as the cause of the social distress in the south, and asserted that the deplorable economic condition of that part of the country was mainly owing to excessive rents, and that, in fact, so long as the disturbances continued, all such attempts at reform might be regarded as inopportune. Other members of the House went still further, and designated Grattan's proposal a direct capitulation to sedition. The House carried a motion to proceed to the orders of the day, and, consequently, Grattan's motion was lost.¹

But this distinguished politician was not deterred by his

¹ For Grattan's proposals on the 13th March, 1787, and the succeeding debate, see Grattan's "Speeches," ii. pp. 9-16; comp. Plowden, ii. p. 164 *et seq.*; also "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 306 *et seq.*

ill-success. Early in the following year he made two attempts to obtain a readjustment of the tithe question. The first occasion was on the 14th February, when in a forcible speech, remarkable for its mastery of details, he moved for the appointment of a commission to report on the existing tithe system. This having proved unsuccessful, he laid before the House of Commons, on the 14th April in the same year, a number of resolutions embodying the principles upon which he considered the reform of the system of tithes ought to proceed. These resolutions did not aim at the complete abolition of tithes, but they provided that potato and flax land should be free from these exactions ; that waste land which was in process of being reclaimed should, for a certain number of years, also be exempt from tithes ; and as a means of checking the nuisance of tithe-farmers, they imposed a kind of absentee tax on those of the clergy who did not reside in the country. These proposals, however, failed to find favour with the House, which, accordingly, rejected them ; and it was not until forty years later, that any serious attempt was made to bring about a reform in the Irish tithe system.¹

When the last-mentioned events took place Ireland had already lost its viceroy, and Pitt his intimate friend, by the death of the Duke of Rutland. He died on the 24th October, at the age of thirty-three, and was succeeded by the Marquis of Buckingham, an appointment which at the time gained the especial approbation of the people, owing to the fact that his wife was an Irish lady. Unfortunately, this popularity was only short-lived. The extravagance of his household, and the continued increase of the pension list, notwithstanding the reforms which he promised on accepting office, created him many enemies, and on the occasion of the debate on the address, at the opening of Parliament on the 6th February, 1789, drew down upon him the severe censure of Grattan.²

A fresh constitutional controversy arose during this session,

¹ For the motions brought forward relative to the tithe question during the year 1788, see Grattan's "Speeches," ii. p. 25 *et seq.*; also p. 82 *et seq.*; "Life of Grattan," iii. pp. 316-334.

² Grattan's "Speeches," ii. p. 97.

which again illustrated the danger which was likely to accrue from the absolute separation of the two Parliaments. King George III. having, during the summer of 1788, shown obvious signs of mental aberration, and the disease having advanced with rapid strides, the English Parliament, which assembled on the 20th November, was compelled to take into consideration the question of a regency. A violent contest immediately ensued as to the nature of the regency to be appointed. Fox, the personal friend of the Prince of Wales, advanced the opinion that, in view of the insanity of the king, the Prince of Wales was entitled *eo ipso*, to be elected regent, and to be invested with full royal authority as long as the malady of the king continued. Pitt, the prime minister, maintained, on the other hand, that, inasmuch as there existed no legal precedent which could be followed in this case, it was incumbent upon Parliament to make such arrangements as the circumstances demanded; and that, therefore, the two Houses of Parliament were competent to impose such restrictions upon the sovereign rights of the regent as they might think fit. The majority shared these views, and, accordingly, on the 19th January, 1789, five resolutions were laid before the House of Commons, containing the conditions upon which the regency should be conferred upon the Prince of Wales. These proposals were approved by the Commons, and were also agreed to by a majority of the House of Lords.¹

The course of affairs in Ireland was a very different one. Grattan was in London at the close of the year 1788, and had been present in the gallery during the debate on this question in the English Parliament. At this time he was already disposed to adopt the views of Fox;² and he was still further influenced in this direction by his personal relations with the Prince of Wales, whose acquaintance he had recently made. When, therefore, on the 11th February, 1789,

¹ The proceedings in England in connection with the question of the regency are treated with great minuteness in May's "Constitutional History" (Ger. trans.), i. pp. 121-132.

² Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," ii. p. 28.

Fitzherbert, the Irish secretary, moved that in consequence of the indisposition of the king a law be enacted to confer the regency, with all needful prerogatives, upon the Prince of Wales, a proceeding which was in perfect accord with the course adopted by the English Parliament, the motion was received with signs of strong disapprobation from many quarters. Complaints were made that the Irish Parliament had been robbed of its initiatory rights, and that Ireland was being turned into the train-bearer of English policy. The Prince of Wales was the only person entitled to be regent, and he ought to be invested with full and unrestricted royal authority ; and that for a matter so self-evident as this no further law was needed. Such were the arguments used by Grattan, Curran, and others ; and a motion was made by Conolly that an address be presented to the Prince of Wales, praying him, during the illness of the king, to undertake the government of the country with full royal power and prerogative. This proposal, which was diametrically opposed to the action of the English Parliament, was chiefly resisted by Fitzgibbon, the attorney-general, in whose judgment the acceptance of such a motion involved a direct breach with the Parliament of Great Britain, and who, consequently, sternly denounced the representatives of Irish independence as the advocates of separation. But in spite of all opposition, the motion was carried in both Houses.¹

This address having been moved and agreed to against the express will of the Government, the lord-lieutenant refused to take charge of it ; and, accordingly, four members of the House of Commons, supplemented by two members of the House of Lords, in the persons of the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Charlemont, were commissioned to present it in person. The Prince of Wales received the deputation at Carlton House on the 27th February, 1789, and returned them his sincere thanks for their attachment to his house. He assured them of the warm interest he took in Ireland ;

¹ For the proceedings in Ireland consult Grattan's "Speeches," ii. pp. 103-130; "Life of Grattan," vol. iii. pp. 360-371; Adolphus, *loc. cit.*; iv. pp. 365-370; Plowden, ii. pp. 236-253.

and, in conclusion, announced to them that within a short time the king's health would, in all probability, be restored, a statement which relieved him from the necessity of making any further remark.¹

The malady of the king had, in fact, taken an unexpectedly favourable turn. After the 27th February no bulletins were issued, and some days afterward, George III. was enabled to resume the reins of government. This event, fortunately, averted embarrassments which otherwise might have arisen in both countries, as the result of the conflicting action of their respective legislative bodies on this question. But, from this time, it became a settled conviction with Pitt that it was impossible for a minister, with two so widely divergent parliaments, to pursue one uniform policy with regard to both countries; and it was the question of the regency which, more than any other, decided him to aim at effecting a direct union between England and Ireland.

The success of the opposition, however, in the proceedings connected with the appointment of a regent aroused such a degree of animosity in Irish court circles, that it was determined to make an example which should, in the future, deter less daring spirits from taking similar action. Immediately after the transactions in Parliament, it was asserted that "sacrifices for the division" must be found, words which were destined to mean more than a mere empty threat, for they were followed by a perfect hecatomb. No fewer than thirteen prominent Crown and court functionaries, among whom were the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Shannon, were dismissed from their posts, for no other reason than that of having voted with the Opposition. The adherents of the Government, on the other hand, were liberally rewarded. They were appointed to the offices vacated by their opponents: Fitzgibbon, the attorney-general, who had been a warm advocate of the Government motion, and had declared himself to be in favour of a union, received in return the office of Irish Lord Chancellor: sixteen peers were either created, or invested with higher rank;

¹ The address, as well as the reply of the Prince Regent, is printed in Flowden, *loc. cit.*

while an increase of £13,000 took place in the pension-list in one year.¹

In face of a Government displaying so much energy in the employment of the influence and patronage at its command, the opposition, split up, as it was, into several parties, and divided by different interests, was not in an enviable condition. It was evident that only by the most resolute and hearty co-operation of all its various sections could it ever hope to offer any effectual resistance to Castle influence, or be able to defend the constitution of 1782 from the attacks of Fitzgibbon and his party. The collective opponents of the ruling system, accordingly, determined to organize themselves, so as to form a united body, and, on June 26th, 1789, was founded the Whig Club.

Every shade of opposition, from that of the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Shannon, to the Radicalism of Napper Tandy and Hamilton Rowan, was represented in this association, which, though necessarily losing much of its capacity for effectiveness by the union of such dissimilar elements, nevertheless sought to bridge over its differences by a moderate programme, whose chief aim was the defence of the constitution of 1782.²

The administration of the Marquis of Buckingham, in consequence, partly, of his reckless misuse of the nation's revenues, and his unscrupulous employment of every species of patronage,—and partly owing to his hostile attitude towards the national party, speedily fell into disrepute. When, therefore, chagrined at the rejection of his application for a dukedom, he resigned his post, the news was received by the country with universal satisfaction.³ Pitt was less pleased by this occurrence, as he feared that the resignation of Bucking-

¹ For details respecting the steps taken against the Opposition, and the rewards dispensed to the supporters of the Government, see "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 389 *et seq.*

² The statutes of the Whig Club, and the names of the original members, are to be found in the "Life of Grattan," iii. p. 432 *et seq.* Some interesting observations on this association by Fitzgibbon, subsequently Lord Clare, will be found in Plowden, ii. p. 272.

³ Comp. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," ii. p. 42.

ham might possibly be regarded as a concession to the opposition. Buckingham, however, persisting in his resolution, Pitt was fortunate in discovering in the Earl of Westmoreland, a fitting successor, who was prepared to adhere faithfully to the policy of the previous administration, and who, accordingly, on entering upon the duties of his lofty position on the 5th January, 1790, retained in their posts all the officials appointed by his predecessor.

In the speech from the throne with which the new viceroy opened Parliament on the 21st January, 1790, he announced that it was his intention to carry on the administration of Ireland on the same lines of wise policy which had hitherto been pursued, and which had laid the foundations of the country's happiness.¹ In illustration of this passage, Grattan, the leader of the Opposition, took occasion, during the debate on the address, to paint in the deepest colours the main features of Buckingham's administration, and to declare that a continuation of this political system would be fatal to the land. The attack was quickly followed by others. Fierce accusations, founded on the increase in the number of places, and the rapid swelling of the pension-list, which had now risen to the sum of £101,000, were hurled at the ministry by members of the Whig Club; and on the 20th February, Grattan went so far as to bring in a motion demanding the impeachment of the ministry;² but the parliamentary majority being friendly to the administration, all such motions were rejected, and the session closed on the 5th April, 1790, without the Government having suffered any diminution of its power.³

Three days afterward Parliament was dissolved, and writs were issued for a fresh election. The Government would gladly have seen Grattan excluded from the new Parliament; but, contrary to its wishes, he was re-elected for the City of Dublin, and took his seat in the newly elected House by the side of many other prominent members of the former Parliament.

¹ Comp. Grattan's "Speeches," ii. p. 189.

² See Grattan's "Speeches," ii. p. 243.

³ For the business of this session consult Plowden, ii. pp. 279-305; "Life of Grattan," iii. pp. 440-460.

In addition to these, two men now entered Parliament for the first time, who were afterward called to play a conspicuous part in the history of their country: we refer to Robert Stewart, Earl of Castlereagh, subsequently Marquis of Londonderry, the well-known minister at the time of the Holy Alliance; and Arthur Wellesley, afterward the still more illustrious Duke of Wellington.

When the new House assembled, it became apparent that the Opposition had rather lost than gained influence by the election; consequently this party had as few triumphs to record during the session of 1791, as it had had during that which preceded the elections. The measures which were introduced by the opposition were, for the most part, limited to questions which had been mooted in the previous year; one exception being the motion brought in by Grattan, demanding freedom of commerce with the East Indies. Ireland was still excluded from all traffic with the territories east of the Cape of Good Hope, and west of the Straits of Magellan; trade with these parts being guaranteed by charter to the East India Company. On a motion for the appointment of a committee to report on this subject, Grattan furiously assailed these privileges,¹ which were granted to a company to the detriment of a whole land; but after an animated debate, in the course of which Lord Castlereagh won his first parliamentary laurels,² Grattan's motion was lost.

¹ See "Speeches," ii. pp. 292-306.

² For the part taken by Castlereagh consult "Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh, edited by his Brother" (Lond., 1848) vol. i. p. 9.

CHAPTER XIII.

IRELAND UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, UNTIL THE REBELLION OF 1798.

ALTHOUGH the parliamentary transactions of 1791 present nothing whatever of interest, this year is, nevertheless, one of great moment in the history of Ireland, because at this period may be traced, for the first time, the direct effects on the Irish people of the French Revolution,—that mightiest of all the important events which have taken place on the Continent of Europe. Whereas in England and Scotland this powerful movement was regarded with coldness and aversion, in many quarters of Ireland it was greeted with enthusiasm and manifest signs of approval. The leaders of the national party did not, it is true, allow themselves to be deceived or carried away by the illusions of this French drama. Charlemont early exhibited an instinctive abhorrence of the principles of the Revolution, and Grattan did not leave his fellow-countrymen without a timely warning. “Touch not,” he said, “this plant of Gallic growth; its taste is death, though ‘tis not the tree of knowledge.”¹ But notwithstanding the warnings of their leaders, many of the Irish could not be deterred from applauding the high-sounding doctrines of liberty and equality; and just as it was in Ulster that the North American Republic found the greatest number of friends, so again it was the Puritan population of the north of Ireland who hailed the movement in France with the greatest joy. On the 14th July, 1791, the inhabitants of Belfast celebrated the storming of the Bastile, on which occasion a fraternal address was sent

¹ See “Life of Grattan,” iv. p. 36.

to "The Popular Commission of Public Welfare," at Bordeaux, to which a reply was also forwarded by that town.¹

Another characteristic manifestation of the intense political excitement existing in the north of Ireland was the founding, in Belfast, of an association called the "United Irishmen," whose statutes were first published in October, 1791. It was intended to be a fraternity composed of Irishmen of every confession, banded together for the sole object of promoting parliamentary reform, and the legal recognition of the Roman Catholic religion; and its members were required to pledge themselves by oath to use their best endeavours to bring about the accomplishment of these ends.² The programme, therefore, was a moderate one, and the society rapidly spread to all the towns in the kingdom; but the fact that ultra-Radicals, of the type of Napper Tandy and others, began to occupy prominent positions in its councils, soon forced it into the republican ranks.

It was inevitable that the widespread dissemination of the doctrines of the French Revolution should have a marked effect upon the Catholic population of the country. At a time when the principles of liberty and equality were being enunciated on every hand, the Catholic citizens of Ireland were, in an especial manner, acutely reminded of the fact that they were still debarred from the exercise of all electoral privileges and rights; that they were still oppressed by numberless burdens and restrictions; and the present time naturally appeared to them more than ever favourable for making an attempt to obtain the removal of these disabilities. Accordingly, in February, 1791, they organized a Committee in Dublin, whose business it was to undertake the agitation necessary for the attainment of these objects.³

Various circumstances were propitious to the aims of the

¹ Plowden, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 331, 332, where the reply is also given. The history of Ireland from this period until the Union is treated in a succinct but lucid dissertation by Hervé, under the title, "Les Origines de la crise Irlandaise," in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1880, pp. 147-174.

² The statutes and the oath are printed in Plowden, vol. ii. pt. 2, App. p. 171.

³ See Plowden, ii. p. 325.

Irish Catholics. It was an event decidedly in their favour that precisely at this time a bill was carried by the English legislature—and that, too, without encountering any material opposition—by which the Catholics were admitted to municipal offices, to the bar, and to the lower government posts. What had been granted to the English Catholics could not reasonably be denied to the Catholics of Ireland.

The support which accrued to them from their old friend in England, Edmund Burke, was also very considerable.¹ He was still as ardent a defender of the cause of the Catholics as he had formerly been when, by his pen and in his speeches, he had first advocated Catholic emancipation. Burke's support at that time was the more significant from the fact that he had just published his celebrated book, the "French Revolution," an event which had been the means of completely severing his connection with the Whig party. Henceforth, he was the favourite of the court and the aristocracy; and, consequently, greater weight was now attached to his advocacy of the Catholic cause than had hitherto been the case. But his efforts were not confined to a mere vindication of the claims of the Catholics among the ruling classes of England; he also sent his only son, Richard, to Dublin, in order that in the capacity of secretary to the Committee, he might be able to render assistance to the Catholics in all the steps they should see fit to take for the accomplishment of their emancipation.

And, indeed, it seemed as if the influence and support of this eminent politician actually hastened the current of events in regard to this question. When, in September, 1791, the Catholic Committee sent one of its members as a deputation to London, for the purpose of endeavouring to secure Pitt's influence in furtherance of Catholic liberation, the grateful assurance was given to him that a bill, which should admit Catholics to the bar, render them eligible for the office of sheriff, and for other county appointments, would meet with no opposition from the Government, which, moreover, was pre-

¹ Burke's share in the emancipation of the Irish Catholics is described by H. von Sybel, in an essay entitled, "Burke und Irland," which is to be found among his "Kleinere historischen Schriften," 1863, p. 474.

pared to take into consideration the advisability of conferring upon Catholics the elective franchise.

Just at this critical moment, however, a division appeared among the Catholics which threatened danger to their cause. The circumstance that several members of the Committee had entered into relations with the leaders of the United Irishmen now occasioned certain Catholic noblemen, to the number of about sixty, headed by Lord Kenmare, to cease their connection with the Committee, and also to present an address to the lord-lieutenant,¹ on the 27th December, in which they repudiated all association with the seditious elements composing the Committee, and declared that they looked solely and entirely to the political wisdom of the Castle for the amelioration of their condition. The Committee was highly incensed by this arbitrary action, and accordingly ordered the name of Lord Kenmare to be struck off its rolls. Thus, at the very moment when it was imperative that union should be maintained, the Catholics were divided into two parties—an aristocratic and a democratic party.

Unpropitious as was this want of harmony for the ultimate success of the emancipation scheme, the year 1792, nevertheless, opened with cheerful prospects for the Catholic cause. On the 3rd January, Sir Hercules Langrishe, a Member of Parliament who, although by no means belonging to the opposition, always honestly strove to promote the welfare of his fellow-countrymen, received the celebrated letter from Burke, "On the Subject of the Roman Catholics in Ireland,"² in which Burke severely criticised former penal legislation, and characterized it as being at variance with the laws of nature and of nations, and opposed both to the constitution and the interests of Ireland; and in which he, at the same time, manfully broke a lance in defence of Catholic emancipation. This letter, in the form of a pamphlet, was widely circulated throughout England and Ireland, and was the means of gaining many new friends for the cause of Catholic liberation.

¹ Printed in Plowden, ii. pt. 2, App. p. 171. (Comp. also *ibid.*, ii. pt. 2, p. 323.)

² The letter is contained in "Works," vol. vi. (ed. 1808), pp. 299-376.

On the 25th January, 1792, Langrishe asked leave to lay before Parliament a bill which aimed at affording further relief to the Catholics. The bill provided that the prohibition against mixed marriages be removed; that Catholics be allowed to practise at the bar; it also sought to repeal that unwise and harassing decree which prohibited Catholics from employing more than two apprentices in their business; and, finally, the bill provided that Catholics should have the right to erect schools, without being compelled, as heretofore, to obtain the sanction of the Anglican bishops.

Timid as were these attempts at reform, and trifling as was the relief sought by this bill, the High Church party, nevertheless, declined to take any share in granting even these insignificant concessions. They urged that by permitting mixed marriages, proselytism and domestic dissension would be increased; they described the Catholic Committee as an association dangerous to the state, which desired to intimidate Parliament and dictate laws to the legislature; and, in short, they strenuously opposed the bill.¹ In the course of these proceedings in Parliament a petition was presented, purporting to be an exposition of the wishes of the Catholics, which had been drawn up and signed under the direction of Richard Burke, who entered the House himself with the intention of representing the petitioners and advocating their cause. This appearance of a non-member in the House was, however, regarded as a breach of privilege, and it was only with difficulty that Burke escaped arrest at the hands of the sergeant-at-arms. This petition was declared to be unconstitutional, inasmuch as it was presented by a private person, and was not an expression of opinion by the Catholics; and, accordingly, it was withdrawn.² Langrishe's bill, on the other hand, in spite of the vehement opposition of the ultra-Protestant party, was

¹ For the proceedings in Parliament refer to the "Reports of the Debates in both Houses of Parliament, 1792"; comp. also Grattan's "Speeches," ii. pp. 326-376.

² Consult "Barrington's Personal Sketches of His Own Times," vol. i. (1827), pp. 340-342.

eventually carried in both Houses, and became the law of the land.¹

Meanwhile, numerous petitions were addressed to the House of Commons, praying for the bestowal of further privileges on the Catholics. One petition, signed by 600 Protestants of Belfast, demanded that the Catholics should be placed on a perfect equality with the Protestants; a fact which clearly indicated the spread of the principles inculcated by the United Irishmen. The demands contained in the petition which emanated from the Catholic Committee,² and which was presented on the 18th February, 1792, were of a far more moderate character. All that was here required was the abolition of the penal statutes, and the restitution of the elective franchise, which, up to the year 1727, the Catholics had possessed; but, notwithstanding the modesty of the concessions demanded, they were received with no favour by the majority in Parliament. It was feared that by conceding these claims, Protestant supremacy in Ireland would be endangered, and accordingly, although Grattan warmly supported the Catholics in their demands, the petitions were rejected on the 20th February, by a large majority.

A question of such magnitude was, however, not to be finally settled by a decision of this nature. As, both in Parliament and in the press, the old charges against the Catholics had recently been revived, and it was being again asserted that the Catholics were bound to yield absolute obedience to the pope in temporal matters; and also, that the pope had authority to release subjects from the oath of allegiance to the sovereign, the Dublin Committee issued a proclamation³ on the 17th March, 1792, which declared the unshaken loyalty of the Catholic population, and vigorously repelled the suggestion that they prosecuted any aims ulterior to the establishment of perfect religious equality. At the same time, it was determined to petition the king to grant the elective franchise to

¹ See Irish Statutes, 32 George III., c. 21.

² See "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 56-64; Grattan's "Speeches," ii. pp. 376-383.

³ Printed in Plowden, *loc. cit.*, ii. pt. 2, App. pp. 179-181; comp. also "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 67, 68.

the Catholics ; to which end it was also decided to enlarge the Committee by the addition of delegates chosen by the various counties.

This energetic action on the part of the Catholics aroused keen excitement in the camp of the ultra-Protestants, in whose eyes the augmented Committee appeared to be a kind of Jacobin club. One of the Catholic leaders, named Keogh, having taken the occasion at a meeting of the Catholic Committee, to thank the United Irishmen¹ for the support they had rendered to the Catholic cause by means of a pamphlet which they had recently published, severely condemning the system of penal laws, the Anglican party made much capital out of this expression of indebtedness. High functionaries of the Crown, as Fitzgibbon and Beresford, fomented the agitation against the Catholics, and it was mainly at their instigation that numerous corporations, and the grand juries of several counties, passed resolutions in which they sharply censured the conduct of the Catholics, and announced their determination to maintain the supremacy of Protestantism, and to defend the threatened constitution in Church and state. The treatment to which the Catholic population was subjected, at this time, was highly criminal. During the proceedings in connection with the petitions, they had expressly been desired to make their wishes known ; and now that the Catholic Committee, in the name of the Catholic population, was endeavouring to formulate these demands, it was stigmatized by the ultra-ecclesiastical Tories as a revolutionary club ; a course of action which was undeniably calculated to cause even the most loyal sentiments to waver.

While the Catholic Committee was thus agitating peacefully, and by loyal means, for the attainment of Catholic emancipation, the United Irishmen had utterly renounced the principles of the constitution, and embraced the doctrines of the French Republic. On the 14th July they celebrated, in Belfast, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastile in a

¹ According to Plowden (vol. ii. p. 380), it was during the sitting of the Committee on the 23rd March, 1792. The pamphlet, which bore the title, "Digest of the Popery Laws," was written by Simon Butler.

manner which unmistakably indicated the principles of their association. Among the decorations of the festal hall there was no English flag,¹ the only countries represented being Ireland, France, and Poland ; while among the mottoes on the walls was the characteristic one : "Our Gallican brethren were born again on the 14th July, 1789 ; we are still in an embryonic condition."

Remembering the part which the Irish volunteers had played in the political achievements of 1782, and influenced, in some degree, by the importance which at that time was attached to the National Guard in France, Napper Tandy and Hamilton Rowan, the leaders of the United Irishmen, desired to possess a similar institution in Ireland. A National Guard was, accordingly, organized in Dublin, and the spirit which pervaded this body may be inferred from the fact that on the buttons of their green uniform the harp, which constitutes the arms of Ireland, was surmounted by a Jacobin cap, instead of the usual crown. When General Dumouriez had defeated the allied troops at Jemappes, these National Guards also attempted to celebrate the victory of the French and the triumph of universal liberty, by a festival of brotherhood ; but the Government, having received timely warning, prohibited it.²

The United Irishmen were thus gaining followers in the towns. Meanwhile, agrarian bands had again become active in the open country in the north, and were greatly disturbing the inhabitants of Ulster. The excitement existing in this province among the Anglican party had spread to the Protestant peasantry, who became infected with the prevailing fanaticism, and formed themselves into bands called "The Peep of Day Boys," who made it their chief business to eject the Catholics from their farms ; while, on the other hand, from among the Catholic farmers, bands, calling themselves "Defenders," arose, who forced themselves into the houses

¹ See Thomas Moore, "The Life and Death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," vol. i. p. 204 ; a particularly valuable work for the history of the revolutionary movement in Ireland.

² Thomas Moore, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 211.

of Protestants, and robbed them of their weapons.¹ The peasantry of Ulster were, consequently, divided into two hostile camps, and bloody conflicts were frequent between them. Several Protestants having on one of these occasions lost their lives, even this calamity, by the malicious manner in which it was represented, was turned to party uses, and was employed to create a sentiment unfavourable to the granting of further concessions. A list of the victims was forwarded to the Government in England, accompanied by the emphatic statement that these unhappy persons had been slain by the Catholics.

But Pitt and the majority of the English ministers were not so shortsighted as Chancellor Fitzgibbon, and the other officials at the head of the Irish administration. If only for the sake of the tranquility of the country, they deemed it advisable to make some further concessions to the Catholics. When, therefore, the Catholic Committee in its augmented character met on the 3rd December, 1792, notwithstanding the vehement opposition with which it had been assailed, and drew up a petition for presentation to the king, containing a declaration of the grievances and demands of the Catholics, there was no refusal to accept the petition, as their opponents had hoped. On the contrary, the five delegates deputed to present it were kindly received by the king on the 3rd January, 1793, and as the result of an interview with the minister, Dundas, they returned to Ireland impressed with the firm conviction that no opposition would be offered to the complete emancipation of the Catholics.²

And that they were destined to receive something more than mere words was very speedily manifest. In the speech from the throne with which the lord-lieutenant opened Parliament on the 10th January, 1793, for the first time in such an official document, a special reference was made to the Catholics of the country, in a paragraph which ran as follows :

¹ For the "Peep of Day Boys" and the "Defenders," consult Plowden, ii. pp. 385, 386; also "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 130, 174.

² "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 76-80.

"The condition of his Catholic subjects demands the serious attention of His Majesty ; and His Majesty confides the consideration of this matter to the wisdom and liberality of his Parliament."¹ This passage naturally aroused the indignation of Fitzgibbon, who had recently been elevated to the peerage under the title of Lord Clare, as well as that of the other leaders of the High Church party, revealing, as it did, the fact that the principles which they professed had suddenly been disavowed at head quarters ; nevertheless, the address in reply to the speech, which was supported by Grattan and Wellesley, and expressed the readiness of the House to proceed with the work of Catholic emancipation, obtained the assent of the majority.

Accordingly, on the 4th February, 1793, Hobart, the Irish secretary, gave notice of a bill intended to afford further relief to the Catholics. In the first place, it provided that all the existing restrictions relating to public worship and educational institutions be removed ; that Catholics be admitted to certain military and civil posts ; and it further provided that the right to vote at parliamentary and municipal elections, as well as to carry arms, be conceded to the Catholics. When the bill came in for discussion in the House of Commons, its principal opponent was Dr. Duigenan, a recent convert from Catholicism, whose entire programme was comprised in the words, "A Protestant king, a Protestant Parliament, a Protestant hierarchy, Protestant electors, and Protestant officials in every branch of the administration." Truly, a remarkable doctrine in a country in which there were only half a million Protestants to three million Catholics ! In the House of Lords, the opposition was led by Lord Clare, who prophesied that the final consequences of such a disastrous enactment would be the complete separation of Ireland from England. These pessimistic predictions did not, however, avail to crush the bill. After the rejection of an amendment moved by Knox, which sought to confer upon Catholics the right to sit in Parliament, the bill, as introduced by Hobart, was carried

¹ Comp. Plowden, ii. p. 399 ; "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 84.

in both Houses, and was eventually placed upon the statute-book.¹

While Catholic emancipation had thus been advanced one step, parliamentary reform, which was the second burning question of the hour, was being strenuously resisted by both the Government and the two branches of the Irish legislature. A motion brought in by Ponsonby, on the 14th January, 1793, for the reform of Parliament, shared the fate of Grattan's earlier attempts in this direction.² In another department, however, there is one gain to be recorded as the fruit of this period. The pension list, which had gradually attained enormous proportions, was reduced to £80,000 ; and the king was provided with a fixed civil list.³

The more the United Irishmen coquetted with France, and appeared disposed to direct their course into republican channels, the greater was the repugnance with which the subject of parliamentary reform was regarded. It was not long after the commencement of the war which broke out between England and France on the 3rd February, 1793, that a French agent arrived in Ireland and entered into communication with the leaders of the United Irishmen;⁴ and although no tangible results were achieved, the event gave rise to the belief among certain enthusiastic Irish spirits, that with the assistance of France, Ireland might be enabled to attain complete independence. The Government itself had no cognisance of these relations with the Continent ; nevertheless, many circumstances—as the celebration of French victories, the action of those volunteer battalions which were under the influence of the United Irishmen, and similar significant indications—plainly revealed what might be apprehended from associations of this nature. In order, therefore, to be armed against these alliances, the Government demanded excep-

¹ Information concerning the proceedings in connection with Hobart's bill will be found in Plowden, ii. p. 406 *et seq.*; "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 87-94; and especially in the "Reports of the Debates in both Houses of Parliament" (1793).

² See "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 119-124.

³ *Ibid.*, iv. p. 140.

⁴ Thomas Moore, "Life of Fitzgerald," i. p. 256.

tional legislation, and, accordingly, laid before Parliament two bills relating to this subject.

The bill which prohibited the importation of weapons and gunpowder into Ireland, and rendered the possession of these articles dependent on a special license, was intended to disarm the volunteer battalions of the United Irishmen ; while, at the same time, it was aimed at the agrarian bands in the north.¹ The Convention Bill,² which forbade the holding of meetings for the purpose of drawing up petitions to the king or the Parliament, and which prohibited the election of delegates to attend such meetings, had likewise a twofold tendency. In the first place it was directed against the reform schemes of the United Irishmen, but, on the other hand, it also struck a blow at the loyal efforts of the Catholic Committee. Both bills met with but slight opposition in Parliament. The only person who resisted the Gunpowder Bill was the youthful Lord Edward Fitzgerald, son of the Duke of Leinster, who had imbibed republican ideas in Paris from his intercourse with Thomas Payne and other members of the French National Convention.³ The Convention Bill was a virtual abolition of the right to hold meetings and prevent petitions ; but it encountered only feeble opposition, and was finally carried in the House of Commons, on the 13th July, 1793, by one hundred and twenty-five votes to twenty-seven. So powerful was the hold which the fear of Radicalism had taken on the minds of even the most prudent politicians, that they unhesitatingly gave their assent to an enactment which was characterised by Grattan as an utterly unconstitutional measure, and as the boldest step towards the introduction of martial law.

Under such auspices, highly unfavourable to the prospects of any scheme of healthy reform, the parliamentary session of 1794 was opened by the lord-lieutenant on the 21st January. During the course of the debate on the address,⁴ Grattan

¹ For the Gunpowder Bill, see Moore, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 219, 220 ; also "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 136.

² Comp. Thomas Moore, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 220 ; "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 138.

³ Thomas Moore, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 170 *et seq.*

⁴ "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 145.

delivered a speech which was severely censured¹ by the Radicals of the Fitzgerald type, but which was characterised by a strain of the loftiest patriotism. While recognising no other external policy for Ireland than to stand or fall with England, as regarded the internal politics of the country, he demanded, most urgently and energetically, the perfecting of the constitution and the removal of the crying abuses connected with parliamentary elections. On the 4th March, therefore, in answer to this demand, W. Ponsonby again brought in a reform bill,² which was intended to entirely remodel the boroughs—the seat of parliamentary corruption,—and to reduce the number of members. But much as a moderate measure of reform was needed, and effectual as such a measure would have been in wresting the most dangerous weapon out of the hands of the United Irishmen, whose chief demand was for a radical reform of parliamentary institutions, the prevailing sentiment among members of the House, who were completely dominated by a horror of Radicalism, left no doubt as to the ultimate fate of the bill. A motion that the bill be read that day six months was made by Sir H. Langrishe, who, although by no means averse to a reasonable rate of progress, considered that it would be dangerous to confer fresh rights and privileges upon the people in such troublous times ; and exemplified his statement that the present time was ill chosen for the introduction of such reforms by pointing to the condition of France. This allusion was seized hold of by Grattan, who replied to the previous speaker in an eloquent speech, in the course of which he said : “ But, says the right honourable baronet, ‘ France ! take warning by France ! ’ If France is to be a lesson, take the whole of that lesson ; if her frantic Convention is to be a monitress against the views of a republic, let the causes which produced that Convention, be an admonition against the abuses of monarchy. France would reform nothing until abuses accumulated, and Government was swept away in the deluge ; until an armed force redressed the state.” The best means to hinder the entrance

¹ Thomas Moore, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 234.

² See “Life of Grattan,” iv. pp. 147–151 ; Plowden, ii. pp. 452–454.

of republican ideas was, therefore—and this thought was the essence of his speech,—to effect prudent and reasonable reforms. But his words might as well have been addressed to the winds. The motion of Langrishe was carried, and Ponsonby's bill was accordingly lost. Herewith, the hopes of all moderate reformers were extinguished, while the prospects of the United Irishmen, speculating on the pessimistic position of affairs, waxed brighter.

Now, however, the Government began to exercise strict surveillance over the United Irishmen. Those volunteer battalions which were under the immediate influence of the society were deprived of their cannon; houses were searched for arms;¹ the meetings of the association were dissolved, while one of its leaders, Hamilton Rowan, was prosecuted on the charge of having published a libellous pamphlet, and although he was defended by Curran in a brilliant address, which is extolled as a model of judicial eloquence, he was condemned to two years' imprisonment, and a fine of £500.² The severity of this sentence only tended to inflame still more the minds of his associates, and to increase their antagonism to the Government; while the prohibition with regard to their open gatherings converted them into a secret society with extensive ramifications, and thus rendered them all the more dangerous to the state.

At this juncture, the governing classes in France considered that the suitable moment had arrived for spreading their net afresh, with a view to drawing the Irish into an alliance with the French Republic. The "Committee of Public Safety" selected, as their agent in these transactions, a man named Jackson, who had formerly been a clergyman of the Anglican Church, and had lived a considerable time in France. This man was sent to Ireland with instructions to come to an understanding with the Irish, and to induce them, if possible, to shake off the British yoke. He arrived in Ireland in April, 1794, where he succeeded in gaining access to Hamilton

¹ "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 137.

² For the trial of Hamilton Rowan, see Plowden's "Historical Review," ii. p. 448, where the incriminating document is also printed; comp. also "Barrington's Personal Sketches of His Own Times," ii. p. 119 *et seq.*

Rowan in prison, and in establishing relations with him and other members of the association of United Irishmen ; but, betrayed by a false friend, he fell into the hands of the English Government. At his trial, which lasted until the following year, he was unable to clear himself from the accusations brought against him, and he only escaped the penalty of his crimes by committing suicide. At the moment in which sentence of death was being passed upon him, he swallowed poison, and died in the presence of his judges.¹

The revelations which were made during his trial also compromised another individual, whom we shall meet with repeatedly in these pages. This was an advocate, named Wolfe Tone, who had succeeded Richard Burke as secretary to the Catholic Committee, in 1793, when, in consequence of his dissatisfaction with the condition of affairs, he resigned the post. In this position, Wolfe Tone zealously endeavoured to bring about a close union between the Catholics and the United Irishmen. A document which was produced during Jackson's trial, and which had been drawn up by Wolfe Tone, aroused the suspicions of the Government against him, and he only succeeded in saving himself from arrest by fleeing to America, whither, after having undergone some months of his sentence, Hamilton Rowan followed him.²

The circumstance that Wolfe Tone, the secretary of the Catholic Committee, was suspected of being implicated in the conspiracy with the Continent was a great triumph for the High Church Tories of the country. For if, they thought, an individual who held a conspicuous position in the ranks of the Catholic Committee could be proved guilty of a crime of that nature, the burden of the same might be laid to the charge of the entire Catholic confession ; and this, in their opinion, would effectually preclude the possibility of any further attempts at reform.

¹ Barrington, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 120, 121 ; Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. ii. p. 311. The description of the trial given by the younger Grattan ("Life of Grattan," iv. p. 164), is marred by exaggeration.

² For Wolfe Tone consult his own diary, "Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone, written by himself, and edited by his son, W. Th. Wolfe Tone" (1826, 2 vols.) ; also "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 166.

The English prime minister, Pitt, did not, however, pursue the fanatical and illiberal policy of these exclusive, ultra-churchmen, who desired to avenge the crime of one individual on a community of three and a half million persons ; on the contrary, just at that time he was more than ever disposed to adopt a policy of concession. As one result of the French Revolution, a number of English Whigs, under the leadership of the Duke of Portland and Burke, had attached themselves to Pitt, and considerably strengthened his position in England. In a similar manner, Pitt now wished to win over the Whig element of Ireland ; and in pursuance of this object, he sought to come to terms with Grattan.¹ But in order to render this possible, it was inevitable that, in the first place, some concessions would have to be made with respect to certain personages. It would be necessary to recall Westmoreland, the unpopular lord-lieutenant, who was, at the same time, a strong Tory ; and in his place Pitt purposed to appoint Lord Fitzwilliam, a Whig nobleman of illustrious talents, who had hitherto been president of the Privy Council, and was well known as a friend of Catholic emancipation. The office of chief secretary he proposed to confer on the younger Burke, an individual whose past career must necessarily have aroused the hopes of the Catholics that an entirely new political system was about to be inaugurated. This gifted young man, however, died on the 4th August, 1794, and it was then decided to offer the post to Lord Milton.²

On the 23rd August, 1794, immediately after his appointment had been resolved upon, Lord Fitzwilliam wrote to Grattan,³ and while assuring him that, in his administration of Ireland, the viceroyalty of the Duke of Portland in 1782 should serve him as a model, he solicited the support of Grattan and his friends. In consequence of this communication, Grattan shortly afterward went to London, where, on the 14th October, at a dinner given by the Duke of Portland, he met Pitt, Grenville, and other prominent members of the Cabinet.

¹ See Lord Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 281.

² *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 281.

³ Printed in the "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 173.

The following day he received from the prime minister a gracious invitation to visit him, in order that they might consult with each other on Irish affairs.¹

This conference did not, however, result in a mutual understanding. Grattan desired a complete change of system, and accordingly, not only demanded the recall of Westmoreland, but also the dismissal of Fitzgibbon, whom he regarded as the most dangerous opponent of reform. But Pitt, who had to contend with the weakness inherent in a ministry formed by the union of many dissimilar elements, and who, at the same time, did not wish to break with his old Tory friends, was not prepared to go such lengths as these. In no case would he agree to the dismissal of the Lord Chancellor, and even Westmoreland's recall must be effected in a manner which should convey no suggestion of offence.²

Moreover, on the subject of Catholic emancipation, the most momentous question of the day, Pitt seemed inclined to temporise, in order not to alienate his Tory colleagues. It is true he had given Grattan the assurance,³ that although the Government were not disposed to initiate legislation with regard to this subject, yet, that if pressure were brought to bear on them, they would, nevertheless, grant Catholic emancipation. But he appears in this case only to have expressed his own personal views, not those of the Cabinet, having on several occasions emphatically declared that, in coming to a final decision on this question, he should allow the ministry perfect freedom.

In consequence of such differences, matters remained some time in suspense, and appearances seemed to indicate that rather than agree to a perfect change of system, and the dismissal of other high officials, the Government would prefer to annul the appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam. Not until the

¹ See "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 174, 175, where Pitt's letter is also given.

² With regard to the question of personal considerations, the correspondence between Pitt and Windham is especially important, the material part of which is to be found in Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," ii. pp. 287-290.

³ See "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 177, where the younger Grattan charges the minister with intrigue and duplicity; Pitt is defended by Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 286.

Whig section had announced its willingness to be satisfied with the change in the lord-lieutenancy was Westmoreland recalled, when he received an appointment in the household as Master of the Horse. On the 10th December, Lord Fitzwilliam took the oath, and assumed the position of Viceroy of Ireland.

The new lord-lieutenant arrived in Ireland on the 4th January, 1795, and was received by the entire population with unrestrained and undissembled joy. Congratulations poured in upon him from every part of the country, plainly showing that nothing less than an abandonment of the old system was expected from the new representative of the Crown.

The lord-lieutenant appeared to be completely intoxicated by this expression of feeling ; and the warmth of his reception seemed, indeed, to rob him of that discretion which, in the difficult circumstances in which he was placed, was so indispensably necessary to him. Liberal in his views and sentiments himself, he was, nevertheless, obliged, in his official capacity, to act with members of the council and officers of the Crown whose opinions were diametrically opposed to his own, and who were at the same time fully determined to offer the most strenuous resistance to those reforms which it was his purpose to carry out, and which the nation expected from him. In such circumstances he ought, in the first place, to have waited until his adversaries had offered any factious opposition to his schemes, and then he might have been able to convince the English prime minister of the impossibility of co-operating with elements so diverse in their character. In that case, inasmuch as Pitt at heart agreed with him, he would assuredly have succeeded in effecting the purification of the official ranks. But instead of quietly awaiting the misdeeds of his opponents, he committed the gravest error himself, and straightway threw down the gauntlet to the Tories by removing from their posts two of the highest Tory officers of the Crown—Beresford, first commissioner of the revenue, and Cooke, secretary of war.

As Pitt had expressly stipulated that, except in case of

official insubordination,¹ no other Irish Crown servant should be dismissed on the accession of Fitzwilliam, this act was in direct contravention of the agreement. Moreover, the proceeding was marked by a really indecent haste. The new viceroy entered upon office on the 4th January, and on January 7th Beresford was informed that his removal was contemplated.² Beresford and Cooke immediately communicated with their influential friends in England ; and in complaining of the treatment to which they had been subjected, they contrived to make such a forcible presentment of their grievances, that dissatisfaction with the new viceroy forthwith began to manifest itself in the Cabinet.³

On the emancipation question, too, Lord Fitzwilliam exhibited but little prudence. While several of the Tory ministers were irreconcilably opposed to the demands for perfect religious equality, and even the attitude of Pitt himself was one of apparent indecision, he being determined to await the action of the House of Commons, Fitzwilliam, on the other hand, accepted petitions in favour of Catholic emancipation immediately after his arrival in Ireland ; and although Pitt had expressly counselled him to impose upon himself a certain amount of reserve in his public acts, he nevertheless replied to them in a sense decidedly favourable to the petitioners.⁴ The result was that petitions from all parts of the country poured in upon Parliament, praying for the establishment of perfect equality between the religious confessions ; and in a few days the number of signatures amounted to 500,000.⁵ The excitement with regard to this question had become so intense, that Grattan, the old and tried champion of the Catholic cause in Parliament, conceived it to be his duty to delay no longer. Accordingly, on the 12th February, 1795, he applied for leave to bring in a bill intended to effect

¹ Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 293.

² Comp. the interesting letter of Fitzgibbon to Beresford in the "Beresford Correspondence," ii. p. 88 ; also Stanhope, ii. p. 300.

³ See Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 301.

⁴ "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 183.

⁵ See the letter from Dr. Hussey in "Burke's Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 277.

the complete emancipation of the Catholics ; and against this request only three voices were raised.¹ In spite of this immense majority, "the small but powerful party" of the ultra-Tories, knew how to spin their web in the most skilful manner. Two days after the measure was introduced, Lord Clare wrote to London that he would shortly forward the bill accompanied by the necessary comments, but that he hoped the sovereign would never permit a bill of this nature to become law.² This attempt to defeat the measure was, however, wholly unnecessary. George III., a staunch Protestant, and at the same time a man of extremely narrow views, was troubled with qualms of conscience, and was of opinion that a complete emancipation of the Catholics would be inconsistent with his coronation oath. On the 6th February, therefore, he caused a detailed statement to be sent to the prime minister, in which he set forth that the action of Lord Fitzwilliam could only be regarded as a direct violation of that system of administration which had been pursued in Ireland since the expulsion of James II., and that, in his judgment, it would be a more sagacious course to make a change in the administration than to continue a policy which was calculated sooner or later to ruin one, if not both, of the kingdoms.³

The monarch's views were very cordially supported by the Tory members of the Cabinet, who, indeed, regarded the large admixture of the Whig element in the ministry with but little satisfaction, and now took occasion of the indiscreet conduct of Fitzwilliam, to reproach Pitt with having weakened the Cabinet.

Pitt was not able to resist this combined assault on the part of his sovereign, his Tory colleagues, and the ultra-Conservative official clique in Dublin ; and the consequence was that Fitzwilliam was sacrificed. On the 21st February, 1795, Pitt wrote to him a letter in which he courteously, but firmly, pointed out the mistakes of his administration, the result of

¹ "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 187.

² "Beresford Correspondence," ii. p. 73 ; Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 304.

³ Printed in Stanhope, vol. ii., App., pp. 23-25.

which was that on February 25th, the lord-lieutenant asked to be relieved of his viceregal duties. On the 19th March, it was resolved at a Cabinet Council that his recall was a step absolutely necessary for the welfare of the kingdom ; and a month later the lord-lieutenant said farewell to the country to which, but a short time before, he had been so enthusiastically welcomed. On the day of his departure, the entire capital appeared to be in mourning ; places of business were closed ; and the carriage which bore him to the landing-stage was dragged through the streets by some of the most prominent citizens of Dublin.¹ After his arrival in London, he received numerous addresses of thanks, while petitions were presented to the king lamenting the departure of the viceroy and complaining of the attitude of the Government. Thus ended the first Liberal Irish administration which was friendly to the Catholics, having lasted scarcely three months, notwithstanding the promising auspices under which it commenced.

Immediately after his return to England, Fitzwilliam felt himself called upon to justify the policy he had pursued in Ireland, and, accordingly, he published two letters, addressed to Lord Carlisle,² from which it appears that the viceroy had supposed himself to be in perfect accord with the prime minister and the other members of the ministry, in his ideas on the question of Catholic emancipation, and that he would never have accepted office had he believed that the rest of the Cabinet did not share his views. If these letters suffice to clear him from the charge of insubordination, it cannot be denied that his conduct was, at least, precipitate and impolitic.

Meanwhile, his cause had been taken up in the English Parliament by his friends among the Whig party. The recall of Fitzwilliam was made the occasion of an attack on the

¹ An account of Lord Fitzwilliam's departure is to be found in Plowden, ii. p. 511.

² Printed in Plowden, ii. p. 473. On the other hand, Westmoreland expressly declared in Parliament that he had been assured by Pitt that Fitzwilliam had received no authority from the Cabinet for his subsequent action with regard to the question of Catholic emancipation (Plowden, ii. 471).

Government in the House of Lords by the Duke of Norfolk, and by Fox and Jekyll in the House of Commons. A demand was made that the correspondence between Fitzwilliam and the ministry should be laid before the House, in order that members might be enabled to learn the real grounds for the recall of the late viceroy. This demand was, however, peremptorily refused by Pitt and Grenville,¹ as being inconsistent with the welfare of the state, and incompatible with the royal prerogative.

Lord Fitzwilliam was succeeded in the lord-lieutenancy by Lord Camden, the son of the celebrated democratic lawyer of that name. It was understood that the Government of the country should be conducted on the old lines, he having received express injunctions from his sovereign to reinstate in their posts those officials who had been dismissed ; and, before all things, to support the Protestant religion and promote English interests.²

To the Irish, the appointment signified a determination on the part of the Government to return to the old system ; consequently, when the new viceroy arrived in Dublin on the 31st March, his appearance was the signal for violent manifestations of displeasure among the population. While the new lord-lieutenant was taking the oath at the Castle, a riot broke out in the streets, in the course of which the carriage of the chancellor was attacked, and an angry mob surrounded the custom house for the purpose of seizing the obnoxious Beresford ; and it was not until the assistance of the military had been obtained that order could be restored.³

Shortly after Camden's accession to office, Grattan's emancipation bill was brought on for the second reading, and the voting on this occasion is eminently characteristic of the state of parliamentary life at that period. Whereas on the 12th February—during the time, that is, when Lord Fitzwilliam

¹ For these transactions consult Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," ii. pp. 309, 310 ; also Plowden, ii. p. 529.

² Comp. the letter of George III. to Pitt, bearing date the 10th March, 1795 (Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii., App., p. 27).

³ Comp. "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 226.

was at the helm of affairs, and advocated the removal of Catholic disabilities—only three voices were raised against the introduction of the bill; on its second reading, on May 4th, 1795, when another current of opinion had set in in Government circles consequent upon the appointment of Lord Camden, the same bill was rejected in the same Parliament by 155 votes to 84,¹ a clear evidence of the strength of the influence exerted by the Government on the members of the House of Commons.

The administration of Camden was marked by only one measure favourable to the Catholics, which was the founding of the Catholic seminary at Maynooth. During the time of the persecution of the Catholics, their clergy were educated on the Continent; great numbers of Catholic priests having been trained in France, especially at the colleges of St. Omer and Douay. But in the storms of the French Revolution these institutions had been swept away, and in view of this fact, Archbishop Troy, in the name of the entire Catholic prelacy, presented a petition to Westmoreland in 1794, in which he dwelt upon the urgent necessity which existed in the country for clerical seminaries, and prayed for permission to erect an academical institution in Ireland for the education of the priesthood. Pitt considered that the necessity had been established, and it was, therefore, determined, in 1795, to found the Catholic college at Maynooth, and to contribute an annual grant of £9,000 towards its maintenance. This was the first, and for a long time, the only support which any institution in connection with the Catholic Church in Ireland received from the state.²

Apart from this slight concession, all the joyous anticipations which had so recently been awakened with respect to Catholic emancipation were shattered; and the boundless exultation which had marked the opening year was followed by a disappointment proportionately great. Consequently, many persons, who had hitherto cherished the hope that they would be able to obtain parliamentary reform by loyal and

¹ Plowden, ii. pp. 516-519.

² Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 311.

constitutional means, seeing themselves thus deceived in their expectations, now turned their eyes towards the Radical league of the United Irishmen which, as we already know, had, since the Convention Act of 1794, undergone a considerable change in its organization. The entire confederacy was broken up into numberless small branches, each of which consisted of only twelve persons, of whom one was chosen by his fellow members to act as secretary. Five secretaries constituted a lower baronial committee ; ten lower baronial committees elected one member of the upper baronial committee. Above these stood the provincial committee, and above this again the executive committee, in whose hands was vested the sole direction of the society's affairs ; while the individual members of the association were known only to the persons composing their own group.¹ The oath demanded by the league had also been altered. Instead of each member being required, as formerly, to pledge himself to use his efforts to obtain an impartial representation of the Irish nation in Parliament, the words "in Parliament" were omitted in the new formula, and the object now aimed at was "a perfect, equal, and proportional representation of the whole people of Ireland."² It will be seen, therefore, that the question of parliamentary reform had now been expunged from the programme of this society, and that, henceforth, its watchword was pure democracy.

Meanwhile, in the north, where fanaticism and political excitement were rampant, the agrarian bands continued to increase in strength, and notwithstanding the exceptional legislation which was employed against them, they committed more formidable excesses than ever. There were again frequent collisions between the Catholic Defenders and the Protestant Peep of Day Boys, or Orangemen, as they had recently begun to call themselves, after William of Orange, the restorer of Irish Protestantism ; and on one of these occasions, in County Armagh, the Catholics, although in a majority, were overpowered, and forty-three of their number killed. Shortly after this skirmish, which was known as the

¹ Thomas Moore's "Life of Fitzgerald," i. p. 270.

² The new formula is printed in Plowden, ii. p. 536.

battle of Diamond, and was celebrated as a great Protestant victory, the ultra-Tories, under the influence of the fanatical speeches of Dr. Duigenan, formed themselves into Orange lodges, whose avowed object was the maintenance of Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, which, as it was asserted, was now being menaced. The name of William III. served as a party shibboleth for these unions, the members of which were likewise bound by a secret oath ; and the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne was observed by them as a general holiday, upon which toasts were drunk to the immortal memory of King William, to the clergy of the Anglican Church, and in remembrance of the glorious battle of Diamond.¹

The formation of these Orange lodges tended to stimulate the excitement of the Protestant peasantry, and spur them on to still wilder acts of fanaticism ; so that before the end of the year 1795, the terrorism created by the Orangemen had reached an extraordinary height. They searched the houses of the Catholic peasants, and where arms were found they plundered the dwellings and drove the owners from hearth and home ; in some cases,—and here we quote the report of a Protestant eyewitness, Lord Gosford,² the governor of County Armagh,—no proof was required that the peasant or farmer had committed any outrage, or even that he belonged to the Defenders ; the fact that he professed the Catholic faith was sufficient ground, in the eyes of these “lawless bandits,” for robbing him of his property. Many of the Catholic land-owners and farmers accordingly preferred to migrate from County Armagh, where their lives were no longer safe, into the quieter province of Connaught. Among those who remained, however, the desire was aroused to meet violence with violence, which resulted in the adoption of retaliatory measures, and in many cases the Catholic Defenders revenged themselves for the outrages to which they had been subjected

¹ See Barrington’s “Personal Sketches,” vol. i. pp. 243–247. For the battle of Diamond, and the disturbances which followed, there is a work by Musgrave, entitled “Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland,” which is, however, not an impartial account, but, on the contrary, is strongly tinged with Orange sentiment.

² Printed in the “Life of Grattan,” iv. p. 233.

by the murder of their antagonists ; and, indeed, to such lengths was this desire for vengeance carried, that at last it seemed as if, in Ulster, the age of brute force had returned.

With the object of restoring tranquility in this province, Wolfe, the attorney-general, immediately after the opening of Parliament in January, 1796, gave notice of two bills, one of which aimed at securing from possible prosecution any servant of the state who, in his attempts to quell the disturbances, might have overstepped the limits of the law ; while the other, the "Insurrection Bill," was intended to invest officials with fuller powers for the suppression of outrage. Accordingly, on the 20th February, Wolfe laid before the House four resolutions which, it was designed, should form the basis of the Insurrection Act. In introducing his bill, the attorney-general drew the attention of the House to the outrages committed by the Defenders, at the same time not so much as hinting at the abominations perpetrated in Armagh by the Orangemen ; and when Grattan, indignant that the guilt of the tumults should be so unequally divided, proposed an amendment in which allusion was made to the conduct of the Orangemen, his motion was unceremoniously rejected. The Liberal Opposition strenuously resisted the passing of a law which was designated by Ponsonby "the grave of the constitution"; young Fitzgerald, with justice, protested that the sufferings of the people must first of all be alleviated ; then they would return of themselves to their duty and allegiance; and until this was done all laws and all resolutions would be ineffectual. But these representations availed nothing, and the Insurrection Bill was passed by an overwhelming majority. This Act conferred upon the officials the right to declare a county to be in a state of insurrection, in which case they were empowered to intrude into any house to search for arms, and to imprison every person found abroad between sunset and sunrise.¹

The result of this severe measure was to make English rule in Ireland increasingly hateful, and to drive fresh recruits into

¹ Comp. "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 241-243 ; Thomas Moore's "Life of Fitzgerald," i. pp. 276, 277 ; Plowden, *loc. cit.*, ii. pp. 543-546.

the ranks of the United Irishmen. The moderate elements of this secret society were continually being superseded by more Radical constituents, and ere long, those members were in the ascendant who were planning to throw Ireland into the arms of France as a means of achieving her complete separation from England. These men believed,—and herein they cherished no illusion,—that English dominion in Ireland could only be shattered by a French invasion, and, accordingly, they strained every nerve in order to bring about such a consummation.

With this end in view, Wolfe Tone, of whom mention has already been made (p. 272), went over from America to France, and there entered into negotiations with several prominent personages in that country, more particularly with the celebrated Carnot, the highly gifted organizer of the French army, at that time a member of the Directory; and with Clarke, the minister of war, who was himself of Irish descent. Wolfe Tone invited these men to come to the assistance of his fatherland, promising them in the event of an invasion, not only the help of the Catholics, who were embittered by the injustice to which they were subjected, but also the support of the Dissenters in the north, whose republican sympathies were well known.¹

In order to strengthen the relations established with the French Government, another leader of the United Irishmen was despatched to France in May, 1796, in the person of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. This nobleman, sprung from the most illustrious family in Ireland, had distinguished himself in the English army by his bravery at the time of the war with America. More recently, in the course of extensive travels, he had been in Paris at the beginning of the French Revolution, where he became imbued with a burning enthusiasm for the doctrines of liberty. Here, too, he married Pamela, the charming adopted daughter of Madame de Genlis, who was governess in the family of the Duke of Orleans; indeed, she was regarded by Thomas Moore, the biographer of the youthful nobleman, as the natural daughter of Madame de

¹ For Tone's relations with Carnot and Clarke, consult especially his diary; also Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, vol. ii. pp. 384, 385.

Genlis and the Duke. By this alliance he became intimately associated with the circle over which the “*Égalité*” presided. These relations with the leaders of the Revolution, in addition to an eccentric toast which he proposed at a fraternal banquet in Paris, resulted in his being expelled from the English army. Shortly after this he returned to Ireland and, as member for the county of Kildare, took his seat in the House of Commons on the benches of the ultra-Radicals ; where we have already seen him, successively, as a strenuous opponent of the Gunpowder Bill, of the Convention Act, and of the Insurrection Bill. After the recall of Fitzwilliam, and especially after the passing of the Insurrection Act, he lost all faith in the possibility of reform ; and being of an ardent and extravagant nature, he surrendered himself to the idea of revolution, and accordingly joined the league of the United Irishmen, at whose councils the valiant son of a duke, side by side with a band of Cataline conspirators, must truly have presented a strange spectacle.¹

It is not surprising that the rank, the talents, and the military skill of this man soon acquired for him a prominent position in the deliberations of the association. Thus, he was entrusted with a mission to France for the purpose of negotiating an alliance, in which he was accompanied by another Radical member of Parliament, Arthur O'Connor, who, however, had not yet joined the United Irishmen. In order to avoid exciting the suspicions of the English Government, the friends first directed their steps towards Hamburg, where they entered into communication with Reinhard, the French resident minister ; after which they proceeded to Basle, and called upon the French ambassador there ; but just as they were preparing to enter French territory, Fitzgerald, whose aristocratic connections, as well as his relations to the Orleans family, had aroused the mistrust of the French Directory, was forbidden to cross the frontier, and hence O'Connor was compelled to continue his journey alone. He ultimately succeeded in procuring an interview with General

¹ Comp. Thomas Moore's “Life of Fitzgerald,” *passim*.

Hoche, who was regarded as the prospective commander of the French invading army, but he obtained no definite promises.¹

Meanwhile, the Irish Parliament had again assembled on the 13th October, 1796, on which occasion Lord Camden made special reference, in the speech from the throne, to the fact that the traitorous organizations of secret societies continued to exist, in spite of all the means which the Government had employed for their suppression. As the cruelties practised by the Orangemen in the north were again completely ignored by the lord-lieutenant, Grattan considered that the obligation rested upon him to point out the real condition of the country ; and as, moreover, the speech from the throne contained no mention of emancipation, or any measure of reform, this distinguished orator felt it incumbent upon him to remind the Government of its duty. He accordingly moved an amendment to the address, “to represent to His Majesty that the most effectual method for strengthening the country and promoting unanimity, was to take such measures, and enact such laws as would ensure to all His Majesty’s subjects the blessings and privileges of the constitution, without any distinction of religion.” Grattan criticised the entire system of administration with keenness and severity, and in the course of his speech addressed the following characteristic words to the Government : “Quick—very quick—you have not a moment to lose ; you have given your fellow-subjects a share of your taxes, your defeats, and depopulation ; kindly, very kindly,—give them now a share of your blessings, whatever your ministers have left you. Let us make no more sacrifices of our liberties ; let us now sacrifice our prejudices ; they will ascend in incense, the best use you can make of them.” But this impassioned appeal to the majority was in vain, and a proof of the extent to which the opposition had dwindled was furnished by the

¹ For the mission of Fitzgerald and O’Connor, see Thomas Moore, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 278 ; also the important letter from Castlereagh, of the 17th Aug., 1798, in the “Castlereagh Correspondence” (“Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh, edited by his Brother,” Lond., 1848) i. p. 309.

fact that the House of Commons rejected Grattan's amendment by 149 votes to 12.¹

On the day following this debate, notwithstanding Grattan's eloquent warning, Parliament took a further step, and sacrificed another of the liberties which had been so hardly won. Wolfe, the attorney-general, moved the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act ; and the motion was carried against a minority of seven.² It was not without reason that Grattan, shortly after this, exclaimed to the attorney-general : " I know not where you are leading me—from one strong bill to another—until I see a gulf before me, at whose abyss I recoil."³ It was as if he already foresaw that a system which rigidly set its face against even the most insignificant reforms, and which met every expression of discontent with violent and bloody measures, must ultimately and inevitably drive the nation to revolution.

The great mass of the people, it is true, whose endurance was being so sorely tried, maintained, for a time, a thoroughly loyal attitude, and that, too, at a period when English rule in Ireland was being directly menaced by France. As the result of O'Connor's mission, the French had hastened their preparations for an invasion of Ireland, and by the beginning of December, 1796, there lay at anchor in Brest harbour, under the command of Hoche, seven corvettes, thirteen frigates, and seventeen ships of the line. This fleet carried 15,000 men, who were to be employed in effecting a landing in Ireland ; and in prospect of a general rising of the Irish, it was also furnished with considerable stores of arms and munition.⁴ It had on board several Irish fugitives, among others Wolfe Tone, who had left America, and now occupied some post in the French army. The squadron set sail for Ireland on the 15th December, but before it had proceeded far, a terrible storm arose which destroyed some of the vessels and scattered the rest. Only a

¹ For the speech from the throne, and the debate on the address, see Plowden, ii. p. 577 *et seq.* ; also "Life of Grattan," iv. pp. 247–257.

² "Life of Grattan," ii. p. 256.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁴ See "Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone, written by Himself, edited by his Son, W. T. Wolfe Tone" (1826, 2 vols.), vol. ii. p. 145.

portion of the fleet was enabled to cast anchor in Bantry Bay, the point originally fixed upon ; while Hoche himself was driven with his frigate on to another part of the coast. Thus, at one spot on the Irish shores, there was an army without a leader, and at another a leader without an army. Wolfe Tone, still inspired with the old hatred of the British Government, desired the landing to be accomplished at all costs, and endeavoured to induce General Grouchy, the officer in command in Hoche's absence, to carry out his wishes ; but, as the forces were considerably weakened, and the expected support on the part of the population of the country failed to appear, Grouchy deemed it advisable to relinquish the idea of landing, and to return to France. Wolfe Tone's disappointment when this determination was announced to him may easily be conceived. "I do not wonder," he wrote in his diary at that time, "that Xerxes caused the sea to be flogged ; for I was just then in the humour to commit a similar and an equally rational action."¹

Although any alliance between the Irish and the French might have been fraught with danger to British rule, not a rebellious hand was raised at that time in the south of Ireland ; and Lord Camden himself was compelled to express his approval of the excellent conduct of the Catholic population. In a letter addressed to the Duke of Portland,² he especially alludes to the manner in which they had succoured the army ; how they had voluntarily lodged the soldiers on the march ; helped them to put impassable roads into repair ; and how, in short, they rendered assistance to them in every way possible. Grattan and Ponsonby were, therefore, in addressing Parliament in January, 1797, fully justified in adducing the exemplary attitude of the Catholics on this occasion as an argument in favour of rendering all the privileges of the constitution accessible to them.³

¹ The most important source of information for Hoche's expedition is Wolfe Tone's diary, *loc. cit.* ; in addition to which consult Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 5 *et seq.* ; also Sybel's "Geschichte der Revolutionszeit" (1882), bd. iv. p. 362.

² Printed in the "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 265.

³ *Ibid.*, iv. p. 267.

At the commencement of the year 1797, the only part of the country which was in a disturbed state was the north. Here, nightly warfare of an agrarian character still continued to be carried on between Orangemen and the Defenders. Moreover, it was in the regions of the north, as is well known, that the United Irishmen had gained the greatest number of their adherents, who, in this district alone, numbered 99,000 members.¹ The monetary position of the league was, however, far from being proportionate to the number of its members, and its stores of ammunition still less so; while the watchfulness of the Government effectually prevented the introduction of arms from foreign countries.

The Government was, indeed, not slow to make ample use of all the despotic powers which the legislature had conferred upon it during the past two years. Houses were searched for arms, and so many arrests took place, that the prisons were not large enough to accommodate all the suspected persons, and it became necessary to convert barracks and guard-houses into houses of detention.² Very harsh proceedings were also taken against the press; and in February, 1797, the military broke into the offices of the *Morning Star*, a paper published in Belfast; destroyed the printing press and the type, and threw the printers into prison.³

But still more stringent measures followed. At the instance of Pelham, the Irish chief secretary, General Lake, the commander of the forces in Ulster, issued a proclamation on the 13th March, which ordered a general disarmament and placed the population under strict martial law.⁴ The legality of this measure was called in question, in the Irish Parliament, by Grattan and other members of the Opposition;⁵ and the issuing of the proclamation was declared by them to be an act repugnant to the spirit of a free people, and one which at the

¹ See "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 279, where the author takes as his authority Dr. MacNevin's "Pieces of Irish History."

² See "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 269; Ross, "Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis of Cornwallis," vol. ii. (Lond., 1859), p. 341.

³ See Plowden's "Historical Review," ii. p. 624.

⁴ Printed in Plowden, *loc. cit.*, ii. 2 App., pp. 262-273.

⁵ "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 273.

utmost could only prove helpful to the designs of the French. The majority in Parliament did not, it is true, deny the illegality of the act, but they defended it on the ground that the disturbed state of the country rendered such a step necessary, and so intense had party fanaticism become, that Beresford, one of the leaders of the Orange party, declared in plain language, that he wished their opponents would resort to open rebellion, in order that they might, at least, be met face to face.

The attempts made by Grattan and Curran to induce Parliament to declare the proclamation illegal, and thus to compel its withdrawal, naturally did not succeed ; on the contrary, another proclamation of the lord-lieutenant,¹ on May 17, extended the operation of the first decree to the whole kingdom, and at the same time granted an amnesty only to such members of secret societies as should, on a given day, be prepared to take the oath of allegiance.

The only effect of the latter proclamation was to make the feeling of the country increasingly hostile to England. Many persons began to be anxious for the immediate arrival of the French, to enable them to revenge themselves on the English Government for establishing the reign of martial law ; indeed, some of the inhabitants of the north urgently wished to attempt an insurrection without the assistance of France.²

About this time the French Government sent a communication to the United Irishmen containing the assurance that France had not abandoned the cause of Ireland, and begging that another agent might be sent to them. The United Irishmen had just, after the pattern of the French Republic, elected a Directory of their own, which consisted of five members, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Dr. MacNevin, Arthur O'Connor, Oliver Bond, and Thomas Emmet ; and this body, accordingly, appointed a certain Mr. Lewines to be the agent of the league in its transactions with France.³ He was instructed to nego-

¹ Printed in Plowden, ii. p. 2, App., p. 265 *et seq.*

² Comp. the memorial of the imprisoned members of the Directory which is published in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. pp. 353-372, and particularly p. 368.

³ See Thomas Moore's "Life of Fitzgerald," i. p. 297 ; and the above-mentioned "Memorial of the State Prisoners," in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 369.

tiate a loan with either France or Spain—and, before all things, to solicit the French Government to send over a supply of arms, of which the Irish were in the greatest need. At the same time, they also endeavoured to obtain an auxiliary force of 10,000 men ; but in these negotiations they were extremely guarded as to making any concessions to France, being very determined to maintain their national independence, and to lend no countenance to the idea of incorporation with the French Republic.

Lewines's mission resulted, however, in nothing but fine speeches ; and as the awakening suspicions of the British Government lent urgency to the matter, a fresh mission was entrusted to Dr. MacNevin, one of the members of the Directory.¹ He left Dublin on the 27th June, 1797, and proceeded, in the first place, to Hamburg, where he had a conference with the French ambassador, Reinhard, and left with him a memorial to be presented to the French Directory. He then directed his steps towards Paris, and personally delivered a second memorial to the ruling powers there. In this communication² he discussed the possibility of an invasion of Ireland, and by exaggerating to an extraordinary degree the resources of the United Irishmen, he endeavoured to place the chances of such an expedition in as favourable a light as possible. But MacNevin, too, failed to obtain any binding agreement, and the only issue of this mission was a repetition of the general promises which had been made to his predecessor.

In order to induce the French Government to come to a definite engagement, MacNevin had pointed out,³ in one of the memorials, that even in those districts where the United Irishmen did not preponderate, the Catholic population would, nevertheless, range themselves on the side of the French. He represented that the great body of the farmers and small

¹ For this mission consult again the "Memorial of the State Prisoners"; also the correspondence of Reinhard with De la Croix in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. pp. 272–294.

² One of the documents is printed in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," i. pp. 295–301.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

tenants had been driven by the despotism of the British Government, and the hardships they had to endure at the hands of their landlords, to make common cause with the French. The Catholic priests, he likewise alleged, were no longer alarmed by the slanders which had been circulated with regard to the irreligiousness of the French ; but they now acknowledged that it was from that people the Irish were destined to receive the gift of freedom ; and thus, in many quarters, the priests had been of considerable service in advocating, more or less zealously, an alliance with France. There may, it is true, have been much exaggeration in this representation ; none the less, it is a fact, that whereas, at the end of the year 1796, the Catholic population of Ireland maintained a perfectly loyal attitude, which compelled even the recognition of the authorities, it now began to be remarked that the Catholics and the United Irishmen were gradually tending towards amalgamation. The dignitaries of the Catholic Church, indeed, continued to exhort their flocks, both by pastorals and by preaching, to conform to the law ; to warn them against entering into any league with the atheistical French nation ; and to point out to them, that only by means of a strictly loyal bearing could the Catholics ever hope to remove the prejudices entertained against them by the other confessions.¹ But the patience of the people was by degrees becoming exhausted ; and they had arrived at the belief that no worse evils were to be feared from the French than those they had to endure from the British Government ; and so it came to pass, that the Catholic population joined issue with the United Irishmen ; and that, for fear of the vindictive measures of the secret societies, the humbler class of priests, in many cases, followed their example. Thus, the alliance which years before Wolfe Tone had striven in vain to obtain, was ultimately accomplished under wholly different circumstances.

Meanwhile, the course of events on the Continent was one which, to the discontented factions in Ireland, was full of promise. The Dutch Republic, in concert with France, was

¹ Comp. the letter of Archbishop Troy in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," i. p. 209.

at that time planning an invasion of England. Hence, towards the end of June, in the year 1797, Wolfe Tone and Lewines were called to the Hague, where Hoche, the French general, imparted to them the "good news" that Daendels, the Dutch general, and Admiral de Winter, were prepared with 15,000 men, and 16 frigates, now lying at Texel, to invade Ireland. But unexpected obstacles again presented themselves. The first delay was occasioned by the desire of the French that General Hoche should again command the expedition, while the Dutch, on the other hand, wished to reserve that honour to themselves. After these difficulties had at length been removed, the fleet was becalmed for some weeks, at the end of which time it was found necessary to replenish the provision stores which, during the enforced inaction, had been consumed; and this, to the great annoyance of Wolfe Tone, who was again on board the invading fleet,¹ necessarily occasioned a further delay. In the meantime, the English war ships, under the command of Duncan, were on the alert; and on the 11th October, 1797, they attacked the Dutch at Camperdown, and gained a brilliant victory. This event put an end to all danger of a Dutch invasion, and once more the hopes of the United Irishmen were doomed to disappointment.²

The summer during which the Dutch and the French were preparing to invade Ireland, also witnessed the preparations which were made by the country for the election of a new Parliament. Henry Grattan, the leader of the Liberal Opposition, came to the determination to retire from public life, and he accordingly issued an address to the citizens of Dublin, in which he conveyed to them his resolution.³ He pointed out that when the land is oppressed; when the press is annihilated; when public meetings, the only aim of which is the exercise of the right of petition, are dissolved, or threatened by the military, then an election has lost all its significance. He

¹ "Memoirs of Wolfe Tone," ii. p. 232.

² *Ibid.*; also Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 66, and Sybel's "Geschichte der Revolutionszeit," v. p. 14.

³ See "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 301.

therefore considered that the best course for him to pursue was to renounce his seat in Parliament. He also resigned, at the same time, the officer's commission which he held in the yeomanry.

His example was followed by several members of his party who formed the body of parliamentary reformers, but Ponsonby, and some others, resolved to persevere and still maintain the struggle. At a time, however, when the Liberal Opposition was utterly disheartened, when the great mass of the people expected nothing from parliamentary representation, and everything from revolution and an alliance with foreign powers, the result of the elections could easily be foreseen. The new Parliament consisted of a small group of liberal-minded politicians, against an overwhelming majority of members unanimously agreed to grant no further concessions to the Catholics. The latter were completely under the sway of the Chancellor, Lord Clare, in whose hands even the viceroy, Lord Camden, was a willing instrument. Consequently, the entire Administration was pervaded by his narrow and intolerant spirit. Pelham, the chief secretary was, it is true, a man of more moderate views, but he was prevented by illness from discharging the duties of his office, and his deputy, Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, who had recently been appointed keeper of the privy seal, was unable, on account of his youth, to create a counterbalancing influence in opposition to the chancellor.

Lord Clare invariably counselled a policy of extreme severity. Above all things, he was determined that the action taken against the Radical press should be energetic and unsparing. The editor of a democratic paper called *The Press*, in which the illustrious poet Thomas Moore earned his political spurs, was indicted on a charge of libel, and sentenced to the pillory and two years' imprisonment. The same rigour was manifested by the judges against all political crimes,—one man being condemned to death and hanged, for having administered to several persons treasonable oaths.¹

In the north, the troops under the command of Lord

¹ Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 104.

Carhampton behaved like monsters of cruelty: they set fire to the houses of persons who were suspected of not having delivered up their arms, and threw every particle of their furniture into the flames; certain Irishmen, some of whom were charged with having been concerned in an agrarian crime, and others with having sheltered guilty persons, were put to torture by being hung up in a tree and left suspended until they promised to confess. The result of such license was that when Lord Carhampton resigned the command, in November, 1797, the soldiers had become so completely demoralized, that his successor, Sir Ralph Abercromby, openly declared that "they were formidable to everybody but the enemy."¹

In November, Lord Moira introduced the subject of the excesses committed by the troops to the notice of the British Parliament; and on the 19th February, 1798, the same nobleman took the opportunity to enlighten the Irish House of Lords as to the conduct of the soldiery, and to ask the Government if it hoped to restore peace to Ireland by burning down dwelling houses, and by flogging and hanging suspected persons. Instead of these acts of barbarity, he suggested the adoption of a policy of conciliation. Were this course followed, the mightiest forces which France could send against the British Isles would have no terrors, for in fourteen days there would not be a man of them left, except as prisoners. This policy of reconciliation must, however, be adopted speedily; for every day that it was delayed but increased the difficulties in the way of restoring tranquility to the country. He then moved that an address be presented to the lord-lieutenant, recommending conciliatory measures as the best means of removing the discontent which reigned in the land.

This proposal was vigorously opposed by Lord Clare. The motion of the noble lord was inexplicable to him, except as regarded in the light of his prolonged absence from Ireland, and his consequent ignorance of the state of the country.

¹ Concerning the cruelties practised by the soldiery, see "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 327.

The Government had for years pursued a policy of conciliation in the island ; from the commercial concessions of Lord North and the establishment of legislative equality, in 1782, until the granting of the elective franchise to the Catholics in the year 1793, and what had been the result ? The formation of revolutionary societies, the system of nocturnal robbery and plunder, the league of the United Irishmen, and the desire for complete separation from England. At such a critical time as this, further experiments could not be made, and the first step towards establishing peace in Ireland would have to be the utter suppression of the rebellion. In conclusion, he was certain that no policy of conciliation would satisfy the league of the United Irishmen, who were completely under the spell of the French Republic.¹

The statement made by Lord Clare was indisputable ; but he forgot that had the Government persisted in the course of wise and prudent reforms upon which it at one time entered, this action would have prevented the formation of such a Radical union in the first instance ; and, moreover, that the responsibility for the abandonment by the Government of its policy of concession rested mainly on himself.

Apart from these proceedings, which closed with the rejection of Lord Moira's motion, the transactions of Parliament presented nothing of special interest. The attention of the people was not directed towards the rhetorical feats of the Dublin legislature ; the eyes of the nation were now fixed on the mortal combat which had just commenced between the United Irishmen and the Government.

¹ For the proceedings in the Irish Parliament in connection with the speech of Lord Moira in the Irish House of Lords, see "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 329 *et seq.*; Plowden, ii. p. 654; Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 109 *et seq.*

CHAPTER XIV.

IRELAND FROM 1798 UNTIL 1800.—THE REBELLION, AND THE UNION WITH ENGLAND.

IT was impossible for the transactions of a secret society such as that of the United Irishmen, whose numbers had recently so enormously increased, that towards the end of the year 1797 it comprised nearly half a million members, to escape, for any lengthened period, the vigilance of the Government. If, therefore, the league wished to avoid the discovery of its plans, it was imperatively necessary that it should take prompt action, either with or without the assistance of a foreign power.

We have seen how the hopes which the conspirators had placed on the expedition of Daendels were shattered. In like manner, the renewed prospect of foreign aid which was again, shortly afterward, held out to them was also destined to prove illusory. The day after the proclamation of the Peace of Campo Formio, in October, 1797, the French General, Bonaparte, was commissioned by the Directory to organize an army for service in England, a command, the news of which was naturally received by the Irish emigrants in France, and especially by the sanguine Wolfe Tone, with boundless jubilation. With characteristic energy, Bonaparte lost no time in carrying out the instructions which had been given to him. He prosecuted the equipment of the fleet with great ardour, and diligently inspected the harbours of the Channel with the object of discovering the most suitable point at which to effect a landing. But he speedily arrived at the conclusion that the maritime supremacy of England could not be easily crushed ; and, accordingly, reported to the Directory, on the 23rd February, 1798, that it would not be possible to attempt a descent

upon England until the following year ; that even then it would probably be impracticable owing to complications on the Continent ; and that the favourable opportunity for such an undertaking was possibly gone for ever.¹ The scheme of an invasion of England, or of Ireland, was therefore abandoned, and the army destined for England was subsequently despatched to Egypt.

During the time in which Bonaparte was making his preparations for war, the United Irishmen were also forming themselves into a military organization, in order that when the right moment should present itself, they might be prepared to take action. The members of the league were arranged into regiments ; a staff was elected, and a plan of insurrection was drawn up by Fitzgerald.² Consequently, when Bonaparte's scheme was relinquished, there existed in the society a strong determination to take the matter into its own hands : in the first place, however, it was deemed advisable, once more, to ask the French Government what possible aid might be expected from that quarter. A letter on this subject which had been sent to the French Directory having failed to reach its destination, Arthur O'Connor, one of the members of the Irish Directory, resolved again to undertake personal negotiations with the French Government.

Accompanied by a Catholic priest, named O'Coigley, and two other members of the league, he left London, intending to take ship for the Continent at Margate ; but after being watched for some time by British detectives, he and his companions were arrested,³ on February 28th, 1798 ; and on O'Connor being searched, despatches in cipher were found in his dressing-case which were capable of proving highly in-

¹ For an account of the French preparations for the invasion of Ireland, see "Secret Information respecting Hostile Preparations in French Ports in February and March, 1798," in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," i. pp. 165 *et seq.* For Napoleon's report, see Sybel's "Geschichte der Revolutionszeit," v. p. 102.

² See Thomas Moore's "Life of Fitzgerald," ii. p. 11 ; comp. also the "Memoir of the State Prisoners" in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 363.

³ See Plowden, i. p. 659 ; Thomas Moore, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 9 ; "Castlereagh Correspondence," i. p. 211.

crimatory. He was accordingly taken back to London, and tried at Maidstone assizes on March 21st. But notwithstanding many suspicious circumstances, the jury could not be convinced of his guilt, and hence he and two of his companions were acquitted. O'Coigley was, however, sentenced to death, on a charge of high treason, and in June of the same year was hanged. But O'Connor was not long permitted to enjoy his liberty : the Government soon found an opportunity of preferring a fresh accusation of high treason against him, upon which he was again arrested, and confined in Newgate.

Shortly after O'Connor's imprisonment, the Government was enabled to strike another and a fatal blow at the conspiracy. Thomas Reynolds, a silk merchant in Dublin, and a member of the league of United Irishmen, was tempted by the prospect of a considerable reward to turn traitor. Having enjoyed the complete confidence of his associates in the league, he had not only been chosen colonel of a regiment in the county of Kildare, but he had also been elected a delegate of the Provincial Committee of Leinster, and in that capacity was present at a meeting of that body on the 19th February, 1798. It having been arranged that the next meeting should be held at the house of Oliver Bond, one of the members of the Directory, Reynolds gave notice of this arrangement to the Government. As the result of this information, Bond's house was surrounded by a body of disguised military police, to the number of twelve, who ultimately succeeded in arresting thirteen delegates of the Leinster Committee, among whom was Oliver Bond himself. At the same time a number of important papers were seized, which disclosed the entire scheme of the projected invasion, and the names of the leaders of the conspiracy.¹ Consequently, numerous warrants of arrest were issued, and Emmet and Dr. MacNevin fell into the hands of the Government on the same day.

Only one of the five members constituting the secret Directory was enabled to effect his escape, and this was Lord

¹ See Thomas Moore's "Life of Fitzgerald," ii. pp. 14-17 ; Plowden, vol. ii. p. 673.

Fitzgerald, who succeeded in hiding himself in a house situated in a suburb of Dublin. The Government would have rejoiced had he fled to the Continent, in order that it might have been spared the necessity of bringing to the scaffold a scion of Ireland's noblest and most ancient house; and Lord Clare intimated as much to his family. "For God's sake," he said, "let the young man get out of the country; all the harbours shall be free to him, and no obstacle shall be placed in his way."¹ But Fitzgerald was loath to be separated from his young wife, and disdained to take refuge in flight. After considerable delay, the Government ultimately offered the sum of a thousand guineas for his apprehension. The offer of this reward incited the agents of the Government to renewed activity in their search, and very shortly they succeeded in discovering the hiding-place of the young nobleman. On the 19th May the town-major, with three officers and eight men, surrounded the house in which Fitzgerald was concealed, and surprised him while in bed. He, nevertheless, offered desperate resistance, and killed one of the officers; but at last, bleeding from several wounds, he was overpowered and carried off to prison. Some days afterward he succumbed to his wounds, and thus escaped the vengeance of the law.²

Immediately after the successful stroke of March 12th, the United Irishmen took steps to repair, in some measure, the breaches that had been made in their organization. They elected a fresh Directory, but the new members of this body, not having the practical knowledge and experience of their predecessors, soon fell a prey to spies, and were betrayed. One of these, Captain Armstrong, contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of several members of the executive committee, and having learned their secrets, he repaired on the 10th May, 1798, to Lord Castlereagh, the

¹ Moore, ii. p. 58. Lord Castlereagh also personally intimated to the mother of Lord Edward the willingness of the Government to connive at her son's escape (Thomas Moore, ii. p. 22).

² In addition to the work of Thomas Moore, comp. also the account of the younger Ryan, whose father, Captain Ryan, was fatally wounded on the occasion of the capture of Fitzgerald ("Castlereagh Correspondence," i. pp. 458 *et seq.*).

deputy Irish secretary, and reported to him the names of the conspirators and the details of their plans.¹ According to these plans, it had been arranged that the standard of revolt should be raised on the 23rd May, and that the commencement of the rebellion should be signalled by simultaneous assaults upon Dublin Castle, the camp at Loughlinstown, and the park of artillery at Chapel-izod.

Meanwhile the Government, kept informed by its agents of all that was passing in the camp of the conspirators, adopted the most vigorous counter measures. The commander of the corps of royal engineers drew up an elaborate plan for the defence of the City of Dublin. Special attention was paid to the condition of the commissariat. The stores of munition were carefully replenished, while orders were issued for a strict watch to be kept on the coast. Having thus taken all necessary precautions, the Government was prepared quietly to await the outbreak of the insurrection.²

Moreover, on the 3rd April, Sir Ralph Abercromby, at the instance of the lord-lieutenant, had published a proclamation in the north similar to the one issued in 1797 (p. 289), which ordered the surrender of all arms and weapons within ten days, and threatened all those persons who neglected to comply with this command that soldiers should be billeted upon them.³ In issuing this proclamation, Abercromby had yielded to the solicitations of the lord-lieutenant with great repugnance, and immediately afterward he asked to be relieved of his post. In his place the Government appointed General Lake, from whom, judging from his antecedents (in 1797), no such scruples or objections were to be feared. The proceedings of this man in the north were characterised by remarkable astuteness; and in a short time he was enabled to deliver up to the authorities 40,000 guns and 70,000 pikes. But who shall say how many deeds of harshness and cruelty were perpetrated before this result was attained? As in the

¹ See Plowden, ii. p. 680.

² Comp. the documents in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," i. pp. 180, 189-197.

³ Printed in Plowden, ii. p. 676.

previous year, strangulation, flogging, and similar tortures were the favourite methods employed to induce the “cropies”—a name given to the followers of the United Irishmen on account of their closely cropped heads—to surrender their concealed weapons.¹

But although the conspirators were thus in a great measure deprived of their arms, and although they had lost all their original leaders, being now, in fact, in consequence of the further arrests which followed Armstrong's revelations, virtually without any leadership at all,—on May 23rd, the rebellion, nevertheless, broke out according to previous arrangement, in the provinces of Ulster, Munster, and Leinster,² Connaught alone remaining tranquil. The ammunition repositories already referred to in Dublin and the neighbourhood, upon the possession of which the insurgents had mainly built their hopes, were so strongly defended that the project of taking them by assault was entirely out of the question ; and thus the energies of the conspirators were paralysed even in the capital itself. In the open country of Leinster they commenced operations by attacking the mail-coaches, after which they united, and advanced on the small town of Naas, situated about fourteen miles from Dublin. Their want of military skill, however, now became manifest, for, notwithstanding the superiority of their numbers, the insurgents were defeated, and the same result attended a second encounter in the neighbourhood of Dublin ; hence they were compelled to renounce all hope of ever conquering the capital.

The risings in Ulster and Munster were not more successful. The rebels made an ineffectual attempt to take Antrim, after which they contented themselves, for the most part, with agrarian outrages. In all three provinces, while the majority of the body of insurgents consisted of Catholics, the greater number of their leaders were Protestants ; and Lord Castle-

¹ Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 116 ; also the “Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons in Ireland,” August, 1798, App. p. 39.

² For an account of the rebellion, in addition to Plowden, may be mentioned Musgrave's work, “*Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland*,” upon which, however, on account of its strongly marked bias, Cornwallis, the lord-lieutenant, passed a very unfavourable judgment.

reagh, therefore, not inaptly designated the insurrection as “a Jacobinical conspiracy pursuing its objects chiefly with popish instruments.”¹

By far the most serious rising was that which took place towards the end of May, in County Wexford. The population of this district, which was composed mostly of Catholics, remained for some time perfectly tranquil ; but, exasperated by the atrocities perpetrated by the soldiery, and filled with a religious and national antagonism to the English, they eventually took part in the rebellion, under the leadership of Father Murphy, a priest who wielded an enormous influence over the masses. The rebels, to the number of 4,000, occupied a hill in the neighbourhood of the town of Wexford, and here they defeated a body of militia, a success which naturally increased their thirst for victory. A perfect religious frenzy now took possession of the insurgents. Respecting this phase of the rebellion, Lord Castlereagh wrote : “The priests lead the rebels to battle. On their march they kneel down and pray, and show the most desperate resolution in their attack. They put such Protestants as are reported to be Orangemen to death, saving others upon condition of their embracing the Catholic faith.”² Inspired by this religious fanaticism, they advanced on Ferns, set fire to the palace, the residence of the “heretic” bishop, captured the town of Enniscorthy, and finally Wexford, the county town. Here they opened the prison doors and released many prisoners, among others Harvey, a Protestant landowner, who from this time made common cause with the rebels. Frightful cruelties were practised on Protestant prisoners, and all the efforts of their leaders to restrain the ferocity of the insurgents were for the most part unavailing. The great mass of the rebels acknowledged no leader, and one of the chiefs of the rebellion himself declared that they possessed but little authority over their followers. “The mob was furious, and anxious to slay every Protestant in Ireland ; and the only means by which

¹ “Castlereagh Correspondence,” i. p. 219.

² See the letter to Wickham of the 12th June, 1798, in the “Castlereagh Correspondence,” i. pp. 219, 220.

the people could be prevented from setting fire to the houses was to remind them that they were destroying their own property.”¹

After the capture of Wexford, the rebels formed a committee of their own, under the presidency of the rescued Harvey, which formed, as it were, the heart of the rebellion. They received reinforcements from all quarters, and encamped, to the number of 15,000 men, on an eminence which commanded the whole of the surrounding country, called Vinegar Hill, they there awaited the attack of the Government troops.

The situation appeared to Pitt to be so grave, that he resorted to the most vigorous measures for the suppression of the rebellion. In the first place, he induced the sovereign to consent that British troops should be sent to the aid of the Irish army.² It was also determined that the functions of lord-lieutenant and commander-in-chief, which had hitherto been vested in two individuals, should be combined in one person, and this responsible and influential post it was decided to confer on the Marquis of Cornwallis, who, notwithstanding the disaster with which he had met at Yorktown, in the American war, was still regarded as one of the ablest officers in the English army. He had been importuned to undertake this arduous and difficult task at the time of Abercromby’s resignation; but it was not until after very lengthened negotiations, that he announced his readiness to accept the appointment.³

When, however, the new viceroy landed in Ireland, on the 20th June, there remained but little for him to do. On the day of his arrival, General Moore gained a considerable advantage over one of the insurgent hosts; and on the following day General Lake achieved a decisive victory over the rebels intrenched on Vinegar Hill, which resulted in the recapture of Wexford, and the dissolution of the rebel army.⁴ The

¹ “Cornwallis Correspondence,” ii. p. 370.

² Concerning the reinforcement of the army by British troops, consult the “Castlereagh Correspondence,” i. p. 221; also Stanhope’s “Life of Pitt,” iii. p. 146.

³ See the letter of the 31st March, 1798, in Ross, “Cornwallis Correspondence,” ii. p. 334.

⁴ Comp. Plowden, ii. p. 754.

rebellion, it is true, was not thereby ended ; bands of insurgents still held out in the hilly districts of County Wexford, but the crisis of the insurrection was past.

Great numbers of the rebels who fell into the hands of the soldiers were immediately hanged, and, in truth, the outrages which had been committed by the Wexford insurgents were now hideously avenged. Bloodthirsty cruelty celebrated its wildest orgies at that time, and the conduct of the Government troops was such as would have reflected little credit on any civilized nation. Hence the new viceroy was thoroughly dissatisfied with the behaviour of his soldiers ; and he openly declared that they had certainly cleared the country of rebels, but that the deeds of robbery and murder which had formerly been committed by the insurgents were now perpetrated by themselves.¹

Cornwallis himself was disposed to exercise clemency towards the great mass of the rebels, who had partly been misled and deluded, and partly been driven by despair and the fear of punishment to take a share in the revolt ; and he, therefore, authorised his officers to allow such of them as were willing to lay down their arms and take the oath of allegiance to depart to their homes. But this statesmanlike policy of mercy and forbearance, which discriminated between the ring-leaders and their victims, and which, while punishing the one class severely was prepared to deal leniently with the other, failed to meet with the approval of his colleagues in the Administration. The only person who supported the lord-lieutenant in his purposes of mercy was his secretary, Lord Castlereagh, who had now definitely succeeded to the post hitherto held by Pelham, and who was also of opinion that it would be in the highest degree impolitic to drive to desperation a deceived and misguided people, whose only sin was that they had allowed themselves to be made the instruments of others. The ruling classes of the country, however, who belonged, in a great measure, to the Orange party, and especially the majority in Parliament, were averse to all acts of clemency,

¹ "Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 369.

and recommended the adoption of the most cruel measures. "The words 'papist' and 'priest,'" wrote Cornwallis, with reference to this fanatical action of the party, "are continually in their mouths, and by their unreasonable policy they would drive four-fifths of the state into irretrievable rebellion."¹ In another part of his correspondence he says: "Even at my table, where you will suppose I do all I can to prevent it, the conversation always turns on hanging, shooting, burning, and so forth; and if a priest has been put to death, the greatest joy is expressed by the whole company."²

But the viceroy did not allow himself to be shaken in his purpose by the prevailing tone of the circle in which he moved. Accordingly, on the 17th July, in the House of Commons, and on the 19th, in the House of Lords, he introduced a bill which, with certain exceptions, proposed to proclaim a general amnesty to the rebels. In addition to thirty-one persons mentioned by name, the exceptions included all the members of the executive committee, all the higher officers in the rebel army, and all such persons as had been concerned in any act of murder. Although this bill accorded ill with the cruel sentiments by which the parliamentary majority were animated, they were eventually induced to give their assent to its proposals.³

It yet remained to arraign the numerous authors and leaders of the rebellion who were confined in the state prisons of the country. Several sentences had been delivered and executed, when suddenly, sixty-four prisoners of state approached the Government with an extraordinary proposition. They announced their willingness to supply every information respecting the secret society of the United Irishmen, and the origin of the rebellion, on condition that their lives should be spared, and that they should be permitted to go into perpetual banishment. By the advice of the highest law officers of the Crown, this offer was at first rejected ; but on its being repeated, and

¹ Comp. the letter to Ross of the 8th July, 1798, in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 358.

² *Ibid.*, ii. p. 369.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. p. 360.

the lord chancellor having meanwhile declared in its favour, the lord-lieutenant decided to accept it. Oliver Bond was never examined. Immediately after it had been agreed to receive the statement of the prisoners, he died suddenly in prison. The three remaining members of the Directory, O'Connor, MacNevin, and Emmet, were subjected to an examination in the presence of the viceroy and the lord chancellor, in the course of which they furnished full details respecting the secret association ; and also laid before the Government a special memorial, in which they revealed the secret springs of the conspiracy, and more particularly its relations to the French Government. It was chiefly with the view of ascertaining the precise extent of these relations that the lord-lieutenant had agreed to accede to the prisoners' prayer for pardon. After the examination, the former members of the Directory were still confined some time in Fort George, after which they were allowed to depart to France.¹

In the course of the examinations which took place at that time, one man deposed, on the testimony of an eye-witness, that on a certain day in April, 1797, Grattan had taken the oath as a member of the league of United Irishmen. Notwithstanding the fact that the witness cited by the informer, who was likewise a prisoner of state, emphatically denied the statement, and although Grattan himself most conclusively proved an *alibi*, this false accusation was so diligently propagated in the circles of his political opponents, that even the lord-lieutenant, who was usually so cautious in arriving at conclusions, allowed himself to be affected by it ; and under the influence of his suspicions he, on the 6th October, struck Grattan's name from the list of the privy council.²

Scarcely had tranquility been, in some measure, restored to the country, when Ireland was threatened by a new French

¹ For this event, the letter of the lord-lieutenant to the minister, Portland, of the 26th July, 1798 ; and also that of Cooke to Wickham, of the 24th July, 1798, are of especial importance ("Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. pp. 370, 375).

² See "Life of Grattan," iv. p. 406 *et seq.* ; also the letter of Cornwallis, dated the 6th October, 1798, in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 415.

invasion. While the rebellion was in progress, the French had been preparing to go to the help of the Irish ; but, owing to the distraction which reigned in every department of the administration during the period of the French Directory, as well as to the terribly exhausted condition of the treasury, their equipment was not completed until it was too late. When, at last, they determined to attempt an invasion of Ireland, the rebellion had already been suppressed, and the forces at their command were too inconsiderable to afford any chance of success in case of independent action. Nevertheless, General Humbert set sail from La Rochelle with 1,100 men, three frigates, and a few transport ships, and on the 22nd August landed in Killala Bay. On receipt of this intelligence, General Lake was sent against him with some regiments of Irish militia; but these troops, ill-disciplined at the best, and having still further degenerated during the civil war, in which they had chiefly signalised themselves by robbery and plunder, were, in spite of their superior numbers, defeated at Castlebar, thus justifying the harsh judgment passed upon them by the lord-lieutenant. In order to wipe out the stain of this defeat, Pitt meditated sending fresh troops from England, but these reinforcements were not required. After the overthrow of his lieutenant-general, Cornwallis himself advanced against the enemy with a considerable body of infantry, and after a short campaign compelled him to lay down his arms at Ballynamuck, on September 8th.¹

It had been the intention of the French Government to land troops on other parts of the island, as well as at Killala, but want of funds prevented the carrying out of this project. One French ship, however, the *Anacreon*, with the Irish emigrant, Napper Tandy, on board, did appear on the coast of Donegal. But on reaching his native shores, Napper Tandy, who regarded Irish affairs from an optimist's point of view, and had boasted that the whole district would flock to his standard, experienced a sore disappointment. Not a hand

¹ Plowden, ii. p. 789 *et seq.*; Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 154.

was raised in his favour, and when he learnt the fate of General Humbert's army, he concluded that the most prudent course for him would be to withdraw from the shores of Ireland, which he accordingly did, and set sail for Norway.¹

During the same year the French again undertook an expedition against Ireland, for which, on this occasion, they were better equipped. A fleet consisting of the *Hoche*, a ship of seventy-four cannon, and eight frigates, carrying an army of 3,000 men, was collected in Brest harbour under the command of Admiral Bompart; and after successfully running the blockade, arrived on the 11th October, 1798, in the Bay of Killala, where, on the following day, after a severe engagement with the English under Commodore Sir John Borlase Warren, the French admiral's ship was compelled to strike the tri-colour, and the *Hoche* and six other French ships were taken. This was the last occasion upon which a foreign power attempted to effect a landing in Ireland.²

One of the prisoners captured by Warren was discovered to be Wolfe Tone, who had taken part in the campaign in French uniform, and under an assumed name. He was, however, recognised, and being specially excluded from the amnesty, he was taken to Dublin and tried by court-martial. Although he pleaded that, as a naturalised Frenchman in the service of the French Republic, he was entitled to be treated merely as a prisoner of war, he was, nevertheless, condemned to death; but he anticipated his public execution by cutting his throat in prison, from the effects of which he died, November 19th.³

Thus an end had been put to invasion, the rebellion had been quelled, and the hostile society of United Irishmen annihilated. But the minister who directed the destinies of both Ireland and England did not, on that account, consider that his task was done. On the contrary, he felt an obliga-

¹ For this subject, see the deposition of the naval officer, Captain Roper, in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," i. p. 400; Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 156.

² See Plowden; also the "Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. p. 7.

³ "Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. p. 7; also the "Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 432.

tion laid upon him now, more than ever, to give his attention to Irish affairs. But if order and security were again to be restored in the land, Pitt was convinced that the old system must be abandoned. Were the Irish Parliament in College Green, with its venal representation and its intolerant Orange sentiments, to be allowed to exercise its functions as heretofore, faithful to its old traditions, it would be equivalent to declaring perpetual warfare between the Anglican minority and the Catholic majority. On the other hand, Pitt feared that if the Catholics were admitted into Parliament, they would soon become the dominant party ; the result of which might be the enactment of laws antagonistic to the principles of English policy, and inimical to the Protestant character of the kingdom. In his opinion the only way out of the dilemma was to be found in the legislative union of the two countries, and the consequent blending of their Parliaments. This once achieved, not only would the direction of affairs no longer, as hitherto, be in the hands of a perverted Orange aristocracy, governed by the interests of class, to the detriment of the common weal ; but Catholic emancipation could also be carried without prejudice to the Protestant character of the United Kingdom.

In the year 1785, when the subject of Ireland's relations to England was under consideration ; and again in 1789, when on the question of the regency the Irish Parliament pursued a course directly at variance with the action of the mother-country, the union of the two Parliaments presented itself to Pitt's mind as a desirable object ; and in this view he was now strengthened and confirmed by the present situation of affairs.

There was little opposition to be expected from England ; on that matter the minister was in no doubt. Several eminent writers on economic questions, as Arthur Young, Adam Smith, and Tucker, had already created a public opinion in favour of a scheme of union ; while the objections which the centres of industry might be expected to urge against such a proposal could undoubtedly be overcome with ease. The condition of things in Ireland was, however, very different. When Cornwallis accepted office, he received instructions to elicit the

views of the most prominent men in the country with regard to the expediency of a union, and after he had been a month in Ireland, he intimated to the Government that the moment was generally deemed to be extremely ill-chosen for the discussion of this question.¹ The most influential men in the country were, in fact, almost without exception, prejudiced against the union ; and the Orange party were utterly opposed to such a step, for the reason that, in an Imperial Parliament, the wide influence which they now wielded would naturally be swamped. The Liberal Opposition, who, it is true, were dejected and discouraged by the recent course of events, and were now of little account in the legislative bodies, but who, none the less, had a considerable number of followers in the country, opposed the union because it would involve the abandonment of all those privileges which had been won in 1782, and which were mainly the conquests of that party. The City of Dublin was unfavourable to the scheme of union because, in the surrender by the country of a national Parliament, the greatest amount of loss would fall upon her ; and, in short, Pitt met with opposition to his project on every hand.

The Catholics alone, who in consequence of their numbers were, as parliamentary voters, entitled to consideration, were not unfavourably disposed to the union ; but the matter of primary importance with them was the emancipation question,—the union being in their eyes an object of but secondary moment. It is not to be denied that they would have preferred Catholic emancipation without the union, to emancipation with the union ; inasmuch as, in the latter case, they would have had to be content with an inferior position, whereas in the former they would gradually have acquired a preponderating influence. As they were, however, convinced that the English Government would never surrender Protestant ascendancy, they had, by degrees, accustomed themselves to the thought of union accompanied by emancipation ; the more so, as they believed that this measure would enable them to

¹ See the letter of Cornwallis of the 20th July, 1798 ("Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 364).

secure the removal of some of the worst abuses in connection with the tithe system, as well as, perhaps, an endowment of the Catholic clergy by the state. Strong in this assumption, the Catholic bishops grew especially warm in their advocacy of the union, while several Catholic priests eagerly drew up petitions in its favour.¹

But indeed it was no easy matter to arrive at a decision on this question. Even in the Irish Government circles, the most diverse opinions prevailed with regard to the subject. Sir John Parnell, the chancellor of the treasury, was a strenuous opponent of the union scheme; neither could Fitzgerald, the prime sergeant, nor Forster, the speaker of the House of Commons, be won over to the project.² The majority of the Crown officials, were, it is true, in favour of the union; but as to the manner of its accomplishment, there was a great lack of unanimity. Thus, Lord Chancellor Clare was quite of opinion that union only could save the "accursed country," as he was accustomed to designate his native land; but he desired before all things that it should be effected, "unencumbered with the doctrines of emancipation;" and he was therefore bitterly opposed to the admission of Catholics to the Imperial Parliament.³ The viceroy, Lord Cornwallis, was of quite another mind. As, during the early days of his administration, he had given evidence of being animated by a wide tolerance and liberal views; so, on this matter, he exhibited the same characteristics. It was his hope to be able to bring about a union not with a party, but with the entire

¹ For the attitude of the Catholics, Castlereagh's letter to Portland of the 28th January, 1798, is of primary importance ("Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. pp. 139-141); see also the communications of the bishops (*ibid.*, ii. pp. 344-349); and the letter from Cornwallis to Ross of the 8th February, 1798 ("Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 8), the latter of which contains an exposition of the views of the influential Catholics, Lords Kenmare and Fingal, as also of those of Archbishop Troy.

² Cornwallis refers at some length to Speaker Forster in a letter to Ross of the 8th November, 1799 ("Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 429); comp. also Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 160.

³ The opinion of Clare on this subject may be ascertained from a letter which he wrote to Castlereagh from London, on the 16th October, 1798 ("Castlereagh Correspondence," i. p. 393), as well as from the "Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. pp. 414, 415.

Irish nation, and he was impelled by the conviction that there could be no peace, and no tranquility in Ireland, until the Catholics were placed on a perfect equality with the members of the Anglican Church;¹ a conviction which also actuated, and was shared by, his young secretary, Lord Castlereagh.

An equal diversity of opinion prevailed in the English ministry respecting the methods to be employed. One portion of the Cabinet—Burke's old party—were anxious for immediate emancipation, and hence their support of the question of union; while the Tory members were implacable foes to any measure designed to place Catholics and Protestants on an equality. In view, then, of these dissensions in the Cabinet; in view also of the opposition which Pitt knew he would have to encounter in carrying through his union scheme, both from the Orange party and from the Tory party in the British Parliament, were he to combine the question of emancipation with that of union; and taking into consideration the repugnance with which, judging from the events of the year 1795, his sovereign might be presumed to regard the proposal to grant perfect equality to the Catholics,—the prime minister came to the conclusion that it would be imprudent to associate the two measures. An agent of the Irish lord-lieutenant sought to demonstrate to him that there were various urgent reasons for the immediate granting of Catholic emancipation; but Pitt was unwilling to be convinced of the feasibility of such a measure at so critical a moment.² When, therefore, Lord Clare arrived in London, in November, 1798, he speedily learnt that Pitt had resolved to proceed with the union scheme alone. The question of Catholic emancipation he left to be solved by the Imperial Parliament.

When the *modus procedendi* had once been agreed on by the ministry, the details of the measure were speedily settled; and on November 12th, the principles of the bill, as prepared by the British Cabinet, were forwarded to the lord-lieutenant.³

¹ See his letter to Pitt in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 416.

² Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 160.

³ See the letter from Portland to Cornwallis of the 12th November, 1798 ("Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 434).

During the two following months an energetic agitation was carried on in Ireland. The opinions of persons of distinction, and particularly of those who possessed large influence in the boroughs, were canvassed, and their support of the bill gained by the offer of a peerage or the promise of promotion.¹ Some of the Crown officers, as Parnell, the chancellor of the exchequer, and James Fitzgerald, the prime sergeant, who had assumed a hostile attitude towards the question of union, were dismissed from their posts; the former being succeeded by the shrewd Isaac Corry.² The press was powerfully manipulated; and a prominent Irish official, named Cooke, of whom mention has already been made, published a pamphlet, in which all the grounds for the union were presented in the most ingenious manner;³ this called forth a perfect flood of refutatory literature, some of which was from the pens of well-known members of Parliament, as Barrington and Bushe.

At length, in January of the year 1799, this question, which had so long agitated the public mind, was introduced in both Parliaments almost simultaneously. On the 22nd January, a royal message to the British Parliament gave expression, in the first place, to a desire for the union of both states, assigning as the chief reason for such a step, that the foreign policy of the country rendered it desirable that a closer connection should be established between the two kingdoms than had hitherto existed.⁴ Accordingly, after a preliminary debate on January 23rd, Pitt laid before the English House of Commons, on the 31st of the same month, eight resolutions which it was proposed should form the basis of the Union Bill, and which he supported in a well-digested and statesmanlike speech, pervaded throughout by a noble enthusiasm.

The speaker commenced by pointing out that the foreign

¹ See the lord-lieutenant's letter to Portland of the 27th November, 1798, in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," ii. p. 448.

² For the removal of Parnell, consult the "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 38; also Stanhope, *loc. cit.*, iii. p. 168.

³ For Cooke's pamphlet, see "Plowden," ii. p. 815.

⁴ Printed in "The Speeches of the Right Hon. William Pitt in the House of Commons," vol. iii. (1808), p. 15.

relations of the country imperatively demanded that an end be put to the existing condition of things, and that a perfect union of the two kingdoms be effected. "Suppose, for instance," he said, "that the present war, which the Parliament of Great Britain considers to be just and necessary, had been voted by the Irish Parliament to be unjust, unnecessary, extravagant, and hostile to the principles of humanity and freedom. Would that Parliament have been bound by this country? If not, what security have we, at a moment the most important to our common interest and common salvation, that the two kingdoms should have but one friend and one foe?" He then referred to the religious question, and showed that while Ireland remained a separate kingdom, perfect equality could never be granted to the Catholics without shaking the constitution of Ireland to its centre, and endangering the safety of the state; but that in a united Imperial Parliament, the question of Catholic emancipation could be solved with infinitely less risk than it could ever possibly be by separate legislative assemblies. The tithe difficulty, too, which, as a matter of fact, often presented itself at the present day as a serious evil, could easily be removed by an Imperial Parliament, without necessitating an open rupture with the existing ecclesiastical system. Everything seemed to point to England as the friend and protector of Ireland, in all the dangers which threatened her peace and security. Ireland spoke the same language, had the same customs and laws as Great Britain; and under these circumstances, the union was a natural one, and ought not to be stigmatised as an attempt to bind a foreign yoke on the neighbouring island; it was rather the voluntary union of two lands which, for their common advantage, were combining to form one kingdom. In this connection, he quoted the following lines of Virgil,—

"Non ego Teucris Italos parere iubebo,
Nec nova regna peto; paribus se legibus ambæ
Invictæ gentes æterna in federa mittant."¹

He was warmly supported by Dundas, and also by Canning,

¹ See Pitt's "Speeches," vol. iii. pp. 28-70; the extracts quoted are to be found pp. 42-62.

who, although a young man, was already beginning to occupy an important position. Owing to his dissatisfaction with the course of domestic politics, Fox held aloof from these transactions of the House of Commons ; consequently, the opposition was mainly led by Sheridan, who moved an amendment which was rejected by a considerable majority.

In the House of Lords, Pitt's bill was equally well received. Lord Moira and Lord Lansdowne, it is true, spoke against the Union, but eventually the bill was carried without any marked dissent.

The course of events in Ireland, however, bore quite another character. In the speech from the throne, the lord-lieutenant also referred to the union scheme as representing the desire of the Crown ; consequently, the parliamentary conflict commenced with the debate on the address. Nevertheless, in the House of Lords, the wishes of the Government met with ready approval, and an address was carried on January 22nd, which emphatically declared the acquiescence of the Irish Lords in the will of the Government. Very different was the result in the House of Commons. On the 21st January, Castlereagh had estimated the number of votes for the Government to be 160 against 100 of the Opposition. But this proved to be a decided miscalculation. When, on January 22nd, an address was moved, signifying the assent of the House to the speech from the throne, an amendment issuing from the ranks of the Opposition, was brought forward by G. Ponsonby, which strongly "maintained the undoubted birthright of the people of Ireland, to have a resident and independent legislature" of their own. After a discussion lasting twenty-one hours—a case certainly unique in the history of Irish parliamentary debate—the amendment was rejected by a majority of one, a result which was greeted with tumultuous applause from the benches of the Opposition. This narrow escape of the Government was shortly followed by an actual defeat. On January 24th, after a second prolonged debate, the paragraph recommending the establishment of the Union was struck out of the address by 109 votes against 104. The victory won by the Opposition was cele-

brated in Dublin by a brilliant illumination, on which occasion the houses of those parliamentary representatives who had supported the Union were mobbed by the populace.¹

Although the debate on the address had clearly proved that Pitt's views were shared by only a minority of the Irish House of Commons, the prime minister did not relinquish the hope that a Union Bill would, nevertheless, be laid before both Houses of Parliament during the present session. But the viceroy, who was better acquainted with the temper of the Opposition, speedily undeceived him, and assured him of the impracticability of reviving the question before the following session of Parliament. Cornwallis also attempted, once more, to make his voice heard in favour of the Catholics, expecting more satisfactory results from a union which should be built upon broader foundations;² but the Government gave him little encouragement; and the Duke of Portland expressly wrote that what was called "Catholic emancipation" could only be secured "by means of the Union, and through the medium of an united Parliament."³

In order to avoid, during the coming session, a repetition of the ill-success which had marked the last it was necessary for the Government to put in motion all the machinery at its command, the more so that the anti-union party was untiring in its endeavours to procure votes against the Government. Numberless meetings in opposition to the proposed scheme of Union were held in all parts of the country, and were attended by immense multitudes—a fact which was presented to members of Parliament as a hint that the confidence of the

¹ For the proceedings of the Irish Parliament, see Plowden, ii. pp. 824-875; for the transactions on the 22nd and 23rd January, 1799, comp. also the letter of the lord-lieutenant to Portland, dated the 23rd January, 1799 ("Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 40 *et seq.*). The prospects which the Government believed itself entitled to entertain are expounded in a letter from Castlereagh to Portland, in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. p. 126.

² Pitt's plans are disclosed in a letter of the 26th January, 1799, to be found in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 56; the reply of Cornwallis, *ibid.*, p. 58. The proposal of Cornwallis to build up a "Union on a more enlarged principle" was made by him on the 29th January, 1799 ("Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 55).

³ The "Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. p. 145.

people would be given to those representatives who voted against the Union.

It is certain that the result of a dissolution of Parliament and an appeal to the country would, at this time, have been disastrous to the Government; but no such step was meditated. On the contrary, the Duke of Portland declared that so much consideration for the electorate would be unjustifiable and, indeed, unconstitutional.¹ And, in fact, it was far easier for the British Government to attain the end it had in view by means of the Parliament as then constituted, than it would have been with a fresh representation enjoying the confidence of the nation.

The most certain method of inducing the parliamentary majority to approve the plans of the Government was propounded by Lord Castlereagh in a memorial which he addressed to the minister Portland on the 1st February, 1799. In this memorial the writer, who, notwithstanding his youth, betrays remarkably realistic views of men and things, as well as an extraordinary insight into Irish affairs, lays bare in the coolest possible manner the secret springs by which the various opposing elements in the country were moved, and at the same time makes a calculation as to the price which it will be necessary to pay in order to gain over these same elements, and thus bring the existence of the Irish Parliament to a happy termination. As one effect of the Union, as contemplated by the proposals of the Government, would be the abolition of a considerable number of boroughs, it was suggested in this memorial to compensate the borough owners for the loss of influence which they would inevitably suffer from the passing of a measure of this nature, such disfranchised seats to be paid for at the rate of £7,000 each, which in the aggregate would amount to £756,000; while it was proposed to render the hostile influence of the counties innocuous by the payment of £224,000. The members of the legal profession, who regarded a parliamentary career as a means of advancement and emolument, and who were, con-

¹ See Portland's letter to Castlereagh of the 29th January, 1799, in "Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. p. 146.

sequently, almost unanimous in their opposition to the Union, were to be appeased by the sum of £200,000. Those persons who had expended money on the purchase of seats in Parliament were to be indemnified to the amount of £75,000; and finally, it was proposed to pay to the City of Dublin the sum of £200,000, with the object of inducing her to look with favour upon the Union. Altogether, Castlereagh demanded for his project a million and a half sterling; and he declared that without this amount of money the desired end could never be attained.¹

Nor was this memorial destined to remain a purely speculative disquisition. On the contrary, the Government determined to carry out Lord Castlereagh's proposal to the letter; and the sum total of the money actually paid as compensation in the realization of this scheme, eventually amounted to £1,260,000, several "fatted borough-mongers," who had formerly been objects of dread on account of the immense influence they were able to exercise on a parliamentary election, receiving sums varying from £40,000 to £50,000.²

This was, however, not the only means employed to capture votes. Irish commoners, whose aspirations tended more in the direction of rank and dignities than of gold, were won over by the offer of a peerage. Irish peers were rewarded for their support of the Government by being advanced to the more esteemed rank of an English peer. Thus, in connection with the Union, twenty-two new peers were created, and seventeen were invested with higher titles.³

This shameless bribery, partly open, partly secret, caused the noble-minded viceroy to blush. "The political jobbery of this country," he wrote to his friend Major-General Ross, on the 20th May, 1799, "gets the better of me. It has always been the wish of my life to avoid such dirty transactions; and now I am involved in them, and am, therefore, more

¹ "Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. pp. 149-153.

² "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. pp. 323, 324.

³ The names of the respective peers may be seen in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. pp. 318, 319.

wretched than I ever was before. I trust I shall live to get out of this most cursed of all situations, and most repugnant to my feelings. How I long to kick those whom my public duty obliges me to court!"¹ On the 8th June, he again writes to the same friend: "My occupation is now of the most unpleasant nature—negotiating and jobbing with the most corrupt people under heaven. I despise and hate myself every hour for engaging in such dirty work, and am supported only by the reflection that without an union the British Empire must be dissolved."²

With the Catholics, too, the Government was prodigal of promises. It was thought that in their case, also, monetary considerations would prove a powerful factor in gaining the adhesion of the bishops to the Union. Accordingly, it was decided to make a proposal to endow both the Catholic and the Presbyterian clergy; and the proceedings were initiated by Lord Castlereagh, who entered into negotiations with several of the Catholic bishops, more particularly with Dr. Troy, Archbishop of Dublin.³

Seeing, however, that no mere expenditure of money could purchase the support of the Catholics for the Government policy on the question of emancipation, the heads of the Irish Administration went a step farther, and allowed it to be generally understood, that in case the union were effected, the subject of Catholic emancipation should immediately come to the front. But, as it was feared that this mode of procedure would act prejudicially with regard to several influential members of the Orange party who had hitherto been in favour of the union project, it was decided to take precautionary measures, and accordingly, on the 12th February, the lord-lieutenant received instructions from the Duke of Portland to ascertain, in strict confidence,⁴ what position these persons

¹ See "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 100.

² *Ibid.*, p. 102.

³ Comp. "Castlereagh Correspondence," ii. pp. 171-173. It would appear, however, from a letter to Pitt of the 24th January, 1799 (Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. App., p. xviii.), that the king was strongly averse to any such support being given to the Catholic Church.

See "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 63.

would be likely to assume towards a subsequent measure of Catholic emancipation. It would appear that the viceroy succeeded in overcoming the scruples of these individuals, for in August we find him journeying in the south of Ireland, stirring up the Catholics, and endeavouring to create among them a public opinion favourable to the Union. Then, in the autumn of 1779, he despatched his secretary, Lord Castlereagh, to London, in order to furnish the ministry with a report of the actual condition of affairs. His presentment of the case was to the effect that the Union could never be achieved if the Catholics resisted it ; and that the opposition of the Catholics would be extremely violent should they have reason to suspect that the ministry continued to regard the question of emancipation with disfavour, and should the hopes which they had lately been cherishing on this subject prove to be delusive. Hereupon a Cabinet Council was held to deliberate on the situation, at which, in spite of some doubt which still existed in the minds of certain of the ministers, as to the advisability of admitting Catholics to the highest offices of the state,—and although they did not hide from themselves the fact that the antipathy which prevailed in court circles on this question would have to be encountered and overcome,—the ministers present unanimously declared in favour of granting Catholic emancipation. Castlereagh, therefore, received instructions to inform the lord-lieutenant that he might confidently continue his efforts to procure the support of the Catholics, but that to give a direct promise on the subject was not considered desirable ; nevertheless, should special circumstances render it necessary for the viceroy to make a declaration, he was at liberty to state the grounds upon which he believed such a measure would receive the assent of the Cabinet.¹

Thus protected in the rear, the Irish Administration lost no opportunity of soliciting the suffrages of the Catholics for the scheme of union ; and their efforts were attended with eminent

¹ These negotiations are minutely recapitulated by Castlereagh in a highly important letter to Pitt, which was, however, not written until a year after the transactions had taken place. (See letter of the 1st January, 1801, in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 326.)

success. Large numbers of adherents were gained, especially in the purely Catholic districts of the south, where the people now steadfastly believed that the Union would speedily be followed by Catholic emancipation. In the north, too, when, in October, the lord-lieutenant took a journey through Ulster, he received numerous addresses in favour of the Union, of which one, in Dundalk, was presented by a Catholic priest.¹

When at length the preparations were all completed—when the Catholics had been won over by the prospect of emancipation ; the borough owners by the promise of monetary compensation ; those persons who were ambitious and aspiring by the hopes of a peerage,—the time appeared to be ripe, and everything seemed ready for striking the final and long premeditated blow. It was, therefore, decided to summon the Irish Parliament for the 15th January, 1800. A number of fresh elections having taken place immediately prior to the assembling of Parliament, Henry Grattan took advantage of the occasion, at considerable pecuniary cost to himself, to obtain a seat for the borough of Wicklow,² in order that he might have the opportunity of defending the constitution of 1782, the one great work of his life. As the speech from the throne contained no reference whatever to the question of the Union, Sir Lawrence Parsons, a zealous opponent of the measure, could not refrain from giving utterance to his joy at this fact, and moved an amendment to the address, expressive of a desire for the continuance of an independent, resident Parliament for Ireland.

This motion was the signal for a violent encounter between the hostile parties in the House, during which Lord Castle-reagh and Corry maintained the conflict on one side, and Ponsonby, Plunket, and Bushe on the other. At last, close upon midnight, Grattan also rose for the purpose of opposing the Union. He had just risen from a sick bed, to which he had been long confined, and was still pale and feeble, but every minute that he spoke seemed to give him fresh strength ; and

¹ See the letter of Cornwallis to Portland, dated the 22nd October, 1799 ("Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 138).

² "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 161, note.

he now employed all the powers at his command, and all the stirring eloquence of which he was master, in the endeavour to save the Parliament of his country. After having repelled the attacks which had been made on the existing system, he turned directly towards the ministers, and warned them not to destroy the stately fabric which it had taken centuries to erect. These structures, which it takes generations to rear, might, like works of marble, be demolished in a few moments. Then he referred to the engagements which had been made on every hand, how commercial advantages had been promised to the trading classes ; state endowments to the Catholic clergy ; and emancipation and the abolition of tithes to the Catholic masses ; "but," he continued, "that which the English minister proposes to buy is what cannot be sold,—liberty ! For it he has nothing to give ; everything of value which you possess, you obtained under a free constitution ; part with it, and you must be not only a slave, but an idiot."¹ But great as was the effect produced by his burning words, they were not able to convince those who had been influenced by pecuniary reasons, and consequently Parsons's amendment in favour of retaining an Irish Parliament was rejected by 138 votes to 96.

This division proved to the Government that it had the majority of the House of Commons on its side, a situation which it hastened to turn to the greatest advantage. Accordingly, on the 5th February, Lord Castlereagh, after having first attempted to find an explanation for the fact, that a measure which, in the previous year, had aroused so much violent animosity, had now been so much more favourably received, laid before the House of Commons the outlines of the Act of Union.²

According to this draft, the conditions upon which the union was to be effected, were the following : Ireland should henceforth send 100 members to the Imperial Parliament, of which sixty-four were to be elected by the counties, and thirty-six by the boroughs and towns and the University of Dublin.

¹ Grattan's "Speeches," iii. pp. 352-373 ; for this quotation, see p. 372.

² Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 223 *et seq.* ; also Plowden ; on this subject Adolphus is somewhat inaccurate (vol. vii. p. 362).

A large number of boroughs were to be disfranchised. The proportion of Irish representatives to those of Great Britain was to be in the ratio of one to five and a half, the grounds for which proportion were disclosed by Castlereagh. The population of Great Britain amounted to over ten millions ; that of Ireland to four millions ; whereas the total of British taxation bore to that of Ireland the relation of seven and a half to one. The sum of the two proportions yielded a mean of five and a half to one, and it was this ratio which had been adopted as the basis of the distribution of seats in the House of Commons.

It was proposed that Ireland should be represented in the House of Lords by four spiritual and twenty-eight temporal peers. The right to sit in the House of Lords was to be enjoyed by the bishops in turn, the change to be made each session ; and the temporal peers were to be elected for life.

All those Irish peers who should not be elected to sit in the House of Lords, should be eligible for election to the House of Commons, but should meanwhile be excluded from all the rights and privileges of the House of Peers. The royal prerogative to create peers should not be abolished as regards Ireland ; but until such time as the number of Irish peers be reduced to one hundred, it should be so far limited that it should only be competent to the sovereign to create one new peerage for every three that might become extinct ; after which he would be entitled to fill up every vacancy as it occurred.

The stipulations respecting trade provided, that with regard to commercial treaties, bounties, and duties, the two nations should stand on an equal footing ; that all taxes which had hitherto been imposed upon goods exported from England to Ireland should be abolished, with certain exceptions to be specially named,—thus covertly introducing a fresh policy of commercial restrictions,—upon which countervailing duties should be laid as a means of equalising the burden of taxation.

For a period of twenty years Ireland should contribute two-seventeenths and Great Britain fifteen-seventeenths of the gross expenditure of the United Kingdom, at the expiration

of which time a fresh arrangement should be made by the united Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland.

The English and Irish Churches were to be assimilated, under the title of the "United Episcopal Church of England and Ireland," and the same doctrines, services, discipline, and ecclesiastical probity should be established in the united Church as were appointed to be held and observed in the Church of England.

Such were the most important points in the Union scheme proposed by Lord Castlereagh. No sooner had he finished his speech than the opposing hosts crashed down upon each other. Ponsonby characterised the ministerial policy in the sharpest terms. In a powerful speech, Grattan once more exhorted the House to remember that it was not now a question of any special measure, of any single reform, but that it was a question of existence, that the entire political life of the nation was at stake.¹ But neither his remonstrances nor his entreaties were of any avail. After a long debate, in a House unexampled for its attendance in the annals of the Irish Parliament,² Lord Castlereagh's scheme was accepted by 158 votes to 115.

At each sitting the same conflict was renewed, and feeling ran so high that after a violent altercation between Grattan and Corry, on February 17th, the two opponents withdrew to another scene of action, and there exchanged shots.³ All efforts were, however, in vain; for the House of Commons proceeded to pass one resolution after another conformably to the wishes of the Government.

The struggles in the Irish House of Lords were less violent, and were more quickly terminated. The Government measure was introduced by Lord Clare in a significant speech on the 10th February; and after a somewhat prolonged debate the proposals of the Government were accepted by 76 votes to 26.

When the resolutions had been passed by both Houses of

¹ Grattan's "Speeches," iii. pp. 380-394.

² See "Cornwallis Correspondence," iii. p. 181.

³ Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," iii. p. 226.

the Irish Parliament, they were sent to the sovereign, accompanied by an address ; and on the 2nd April, the king caused them to be laid before the British Parliament, with a request to bring the work, so happily begun, to a speedy completion. Accordingly, both the House of Lords and the House of Commons took the measure under deliberation on the same day, the 21st April. In the House of Lords only three votes were given against the Government, but in the House of Commons there was less unanimity. The Opposition, led by Sheridan and Grey, endeavoured to preserve the independence of Ireland, by demanding the dissolution of the Irish Parliament and an appeal to the country ; the further discussion of the question to be postponed until the issue be ascertained. This motion was, however, only able to secure 30 votes against 206.¹

After these resolutions had thus been carried by the Parliaments of both countries, they were embodied in a formal bill, and again submitted to the deliberations of Parliament. In view of the former proceedings in the Irish House of Commons, the Opposition, from the outset, regarded all further resistance as futile, and resigned themselves to the hope that some future generation might be successful in obtaining the dissolution of the Union. This confidence was expressed by Grattan in the last speech which he made on this subject. "The constitution may for a time be lost ; the character of the country cannot be lost. The ministers of the Crown will, or may, perhaps, at length find that it is not so easy to put down for ever an ancient and respectable nation, by abilities however great, and by power and by corruption however irresistible ; liberty may repair her golden beams and with redoubled heat animate the country. Yet I do not," he said in conclusion, "give up the country. I see her in a swoon, but she is not dead ; though in her tomb she lies helpless and motionless, still there is on her lips a spirit of life, and on her cheek a glow of beauty. . . . While a plank of the vessel sticks together, I will not leave her. Let the courtier present his flimsy sail, and carry

¹ For this consult "Speeches of William Pitt," iii. p. 179 *et seq.*

the light bark of his faith with every new breath of wind ; I will remain anchored here with fidelity to the fortunes of my country, faithful to her freedom, faithful to her fall."¹ An Opposition, whose leader assumed an attitude of so much resignation, was no longer to be feared. The bill quickly passed through its various stages, and on the 1st August, the Act of Union, which was to come into force on the 1st January, 1801, received the royal assent.² On the following day both Houses of Parliament assembled for the last time, and after an address from the lord-lieutenant they were permanently dissolved.

Thus ended the independent Irish Parliament, a body which has rightly obtained, for the most part, but an unfavourable judgment at the tribunal of history. Never the representative of the entire nation, but only of an exclusive class, it had, as a rule, sought merely the advantage of a clique, and had only on the very rarest occasions ever upheld the interests of the people ; having almost invariably opposed every extension of the franchise and all measures of reform, of whatever nature. But although it had thus preserved a persistent hostility to the wishes of the people, it did not scruple to sell itself to the Castle for rank and dignities, pensions and gold. The Parliament had lived by bribery, and by bribery it came to an end. Although, therefore, we cannot but regard with the warmest sympathy such noble and high-minded men as Grattan and Plunket, who saw in their Parliament the symbol of their country's independence, and for that reason struggled with all their might to preserve it ; nevertheless, in the interests of the people, the destruction of such a corrupt body was not to be regretted ; and however much we may detest the means by which he obtained his ends, Pitt's policy must, therefore, as to its scope and aim, be characterised as a wise one.

True, England's minister would have acted still more wisely

¹ Speech on the 26th April, 1800, in Grattan's "Speeches," iv. pp. 7-21; for this particular passage, see pp. 20, 21.

² See 40 George III., c. 67. The Act is also printed in Grattan's "Speeches," iv. p. 39 *et seq.*; also in Plowden.

had he caused the Union to be immediately followed by Catholic emancipation. Although no express and definite promise had been given, the Catholics of Ireland had every reason to expect that the ministry would now grant them this measure. Pitt himself, as well as his colleague Canning, had frequently, in speeches, referred to Catholic emancipation as being imminent. By holding out the prospect of this concession, the lord-lieutenant had appealed to the Catholics for their support on the question of the Union ; and on these terms the Catholic population had willingly given their countenance to the Government scheme. Pitt, in fact, felt himself to be under an obligation in this matter ; but when, on the 30th September, 1800, he called a Cabinet Council to consider the question, he met with unexpected opposition. This emanated from the highest legal functionary in the land, Lord Chancellor Loughborough, who strenuously protested against granting equality of rights to the Catholics, and made especial allusion to the pronounced antipathy of his sovereign to any step of that nature. Not long after this, Pitt was furnished with a direct proof of the aversion with which George III. regarded all such concessions. At a levee on the 28th January, 1801, the king declared to Windham, secretary of state, that he should consider every man who voted for a measure of this kind as personally hostile to himself ; and on the same occasion he remarked to his minister, Dundas, "I count any man my personal enemy who proposes any such measure. I have never heard anything more Jacobinical."¹ Notwithstanding his sovereign's emphatic expression of opinion on this subject, Pitt, nevertheless, resolved, on the advice of Canning, to remain firm in his purpose, and as the king was also inflexible, rather than withdraw from his position, he resigned office.

This resolute attitude was, however, not long maintained. Out of consideration for the lamentable state of the king's health, Pitt shortly afterward declared that during the king's lifetime he would allow the Catholic question to rest ; and

¹ See Lord Malmesbury's "Correspondence," iv. p. 12 ; comp. also May's "Constitutional History" (Ger. ed., 1862), vol. i. p. 67.

when, on the downfall of "Addington's anti-Catholic ministry," he again entered upon office, he gave a renewal of this assurance. Generous as it may be for a minister to subordinate his views and opinions to those of his venerable monarch, in order to save him mental anguish and conscientious scruples, for the well-being of the state this determination was, nevertheless, greatly to be deplored. Had Pitt remained steadfast, and made Catholic emancipation the condition of his re-acceptance of office, the king would have been compelled to yield; inasmuch as he would have been unable, in the embarrassed condition of affairs, to find another prime minister equal to the occasion. In that case, emancipation would have been carried without delay, and the majority of the Irish people, who were already one with England on the question of union, would by this measure have been completely won over to the Government.

Pitt's renunciation of his determination to carry Catholic emancipation placed the Government in an extremely unfavourable position in Ireland. The Catholics, whose hopes and expectations were centred in Pitt, began to think they had been deluded and deceived. They declared that they had been lured by the prospect of emancipation to give their support to the Union, and that now, after they had helped the Government to realise its wishes, this ardently desired blessing was being withheld from them. Hence, a feeling of intense bitterness against England took possession of the Catholics, who but recently had so loyally supported the Government; and the violent agitation of the following years only contributed to intensify the hatred between the two countries. And when, in the year 1829, in order to avert civil war, England at last granted Catholic emancipation, the alienation between England and Ireland had so largely increased that even this concession failed to satisfy the Irish nation.

Thus, England at that period played the part of the legendary Roman king, who at first refused to purchase the sacred books for a small price, but who was afterward compelled to offer a considerably higher sum for only a portion of them. In like manner, England might, in the year 1800,

have procured peace and tranquility for Ireland by the comparatively inconsiderable concession of Catholic emancipation ; but the favourable opportunity was allowed to pass away ; and now, all concessions and all offers appear to be insufficient to purchase that priceless blessing.

THE END.

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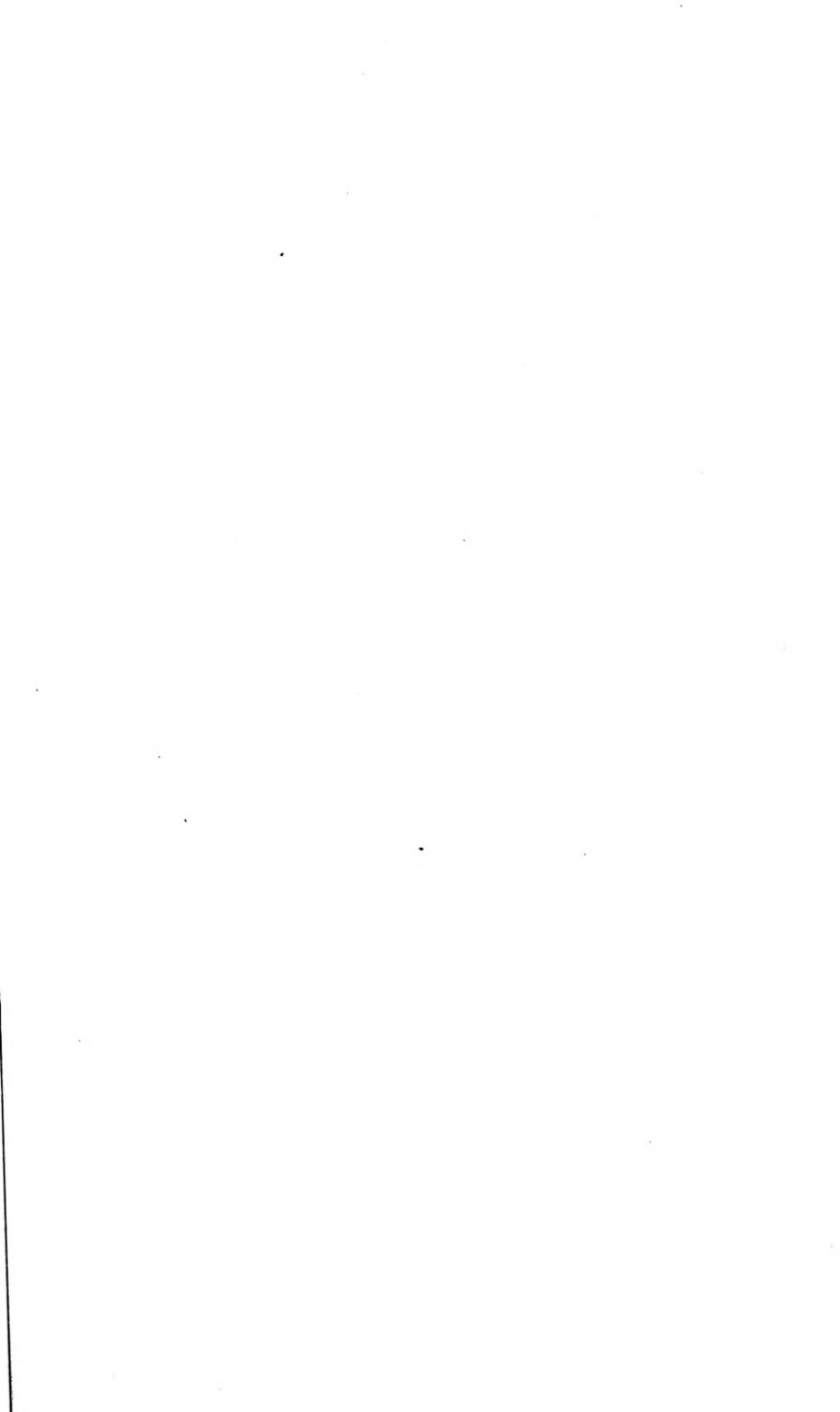
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